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INDIA IN TRANSITION



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&
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No More

"Now he belongs to the Ages"



MAHATMA GANDHI

The Father of the Indian Nation.

Born.
2nd Oct. 1869.

Assassinated.
30th Jan. 1948.

TO

ALL MARTYRS

IN THE CAUSE OF

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are indebted to the writers of several books and plamphlets important among them being the following:

How India Wrought for Freedom (Annie Besent); History of the Congress (Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya); The Communal Triangle in India (Asok Mehta & Achyut Patwardhan); The Discovery of India (Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru) India Divided (Dr. Rajendra Prasad); Consequences of Pakistan (K. L. Gauba); Pakistan—The Problem of India (Dr. Shaukatulla Ansari); The Case for a Constituent Assembly for India (M. Venkatrangaiya) Some Fundamentals of Indian Problem (Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya)

— Authors

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AUTHORS' NOTE.

The Indian Independence Bill, 1947 has created two Dominions in India—India and Pakistan The sovereignty of the British over India as a whole ceased from August 15,1947 and these two Dominions began to function as entirely indepen dent States within their respective territories as also in matters external. The credit for this achievement, principally, goes to the two mighty political organisations in the country. "Quit India" was the Congress demand. "Divide and Quit" was the League demand. The British responded to both the demands. The voluntary relinquishing of authority over such a vast territory is without a parallel in history. Sardar Patel's comment on the Indian Independence Bill was: "On the whole one thing is certain. On August 15, India is completely free. That is the greatest achievement of India and, one may say, it is one of the greatest acts done in history by any Power."

When the country is preparing to usher in independence it will not be without significance if we take a review of the period of our connection with Great Britain so that we may be enabled

to decide our future relationship with that Power as also with other countries of the world. We, therefore, take this opportunity to present this volume to the public. We have tried to give a faithful account of India under British domination. Division of India is now a "fait accompli" and hope now lies in giving a frank recognition to this fact and establishing neighbourly relations with each other.

The ideal before mankind now is—or ought to be—One World State. That is the only way to establish peace in the world. It is in the fitness of things if "India" and "Pakistan", in virtue of the great past both are heirs to, inspite of separation, aspire to take lead in this high and noble venture of mankind. A study of our immediate past will be helpful to all who take interest in the progress of such a venture. We shall deem our labours richly rewarded if the volume serves this purpose.

We are fully aware of our shortcomings and hope that the readers will most generously excuse us for the same.

It only remains for us now to express our profound sense of gratitude to Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who, in spite of his multifarious

activities and heavy public responsibilities, found time to write a short Foreword to our work, thus encouraging us in our first publication.

We also take this opportunity to express our thanks to Mr. P. S. Rabade who offered us an invaluable assistance in preparing the type-script.

We are also highly indebted to Mr. G. M. Joshi, proprietor, Shivaji Printing Press, Dadar, for his valuable aid in getting the book printed and the Ravi Udaya Vijaya Photo Litho Offset Works, Ghatkopar for the delightful jacket and the map given in the book.

Barsi
31 st Dec. 1947.

M. G. Nene.
S. M. Barde.

FOREWORD

The object of the foreword is to introduce the authors and their work to the public. The former are strangers to me and the latter is altogether unknown. Yet it does not take long to become acquainted with either. The work reveals the author. The author proclaims his work. They thus become familiar in a trice and that is my only title to this "invitation."

New times beget new needs. The age of nascent nationalism demands the effacement of illiteracy which implies publications, and more of them in every regional language so as to help in the better education of the barely literate and in advancing adult and adolescent education. The masses are no longer to be looked upon as hewers of wood and drawers of water. They are the artisans that build the Edifice of Independence. The carpenter that builds the mansion remains obscure and unknown but it is his craftsmanship that makes the furniture and decorates the halls of palaces. Who knows the carpet weaver, the printer and the dyer, the painter and the haberdasher that have beautified your home? Equally unknown remain the masses that supply the wherewithal which helps to build the mansions of Indepen-

dence. But unlike the craftsmen they are ignorant. Yet they are our masters and they must be educated by us. Hence the value of works such as this which give succinctly and authoritatively the story of India's struggle and strife for self-emancipation.

The following pages take the reader from the early times of India's modern history which began with the subjection to Western nation through the vicissitudes which have been her lot during the past century and half on to the great Indian Mutiny followed by those three instruments of India's enslavement — the Universities, Courts and Colleges, on to the birth of the Indian National Congress and its crowning victory in the year 1947. Many more books of such importance will come in the near future and they will compete with each other on the principle of survival of the fittest; but the earlier publications will have a clear advantage over their successors. It only remains for me to express the hope that the arduous labours of the authors without which such a production would have been hard of achievement will meet with their legitimate reward by the popularity of the publication.

19 Canning Lane,
New Delhi.
21-7-47

(Signed)
B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

INTRODUCTION

India to-day is on the threshold of a new era. She had completely passed under the domination of foreign rule during the first quarter of the nineteenth century and by this process her destinies were linked not only with the British power that dominated her but also progressively with the larger and wider world outside. The British contact with India brought in its trail all the benefactions, as also the evils, of the Western civilisation. That civilisation being comparatively modern in human history, had the power to adapt itself to the fast changing times during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This adaptability coupled with the invigorating force of materialism and science, that was fast taking hold of the minds of all thinking men throughout the Western countries, enthused that civilisation with boldness, courage, and tenacity and imparted to it an ability to expand. On the other hand the Eastern civilisation as typically represented by India was an ancient and grown up civilisation, and had its roots firmly fixed in the ever-inspiring systems of Philosophy propounded by pioneer Aryan thinkers in India some five thousand years ago. This civilisation had undergone many a turmoil and toil and sustained itself through centuries of history because it also possessed adaptive power in its growing ages. But, as with anything that is human, with the passage of time, it too became systematised and fearful of new approaches to life, thought, religion and social system lest it be uprooted from Indian life by infusion of new ideas, new thoughts and new outlook on life. It was firmly entrenched in its ancient systems, resolutely repelling all inroads

upon its way of life. Witness, for example, the rigid caste system that has persisted throughout centuries along with its two other sister-institutions, the joint family and autonomous village community. These were the fundamentals of Hindu social structure and whether or not they were inflexible at the dawn of history, they have maintained their strict rigidity all through recorded history. The strict rigidity enforced in respect of these systems, however valuable at the earlier stages of the Aryan civilisation, took no account of later developments, resulting in the loss of cohesiveness of Hindu society which could no longer hold out when it came in conflict with the infant but vigorous and aggressive Muslim civilisation of the Middle-East. This Muslim civilisation was entirely alien to the Hindu civilisation and conflicts necessarily followed. But after initial conflicts each adjusted itself to the other and hand in hand, began to tread a common path of building a common nation and culture in India. This is evident from attempts, though embryonic, made by Akbar, Nanak, Kabir, Ramanuj and other leaders in political and religious life of the country. But the process of mutual adjustment was not completed and contained certain inherent disadvantages robbing the synthesis of the two civilisations of its ability to progress. Some of the Muslim rulers in the North, notably Aurangzeb, tried to spread Islam by force of arms and this attempt provoked Hindus to take up arms for defence of their religion and culture. This armed clash naturally resulted in delaying the period of mutual understanding and adjustments and thereby weakening both. Nevertheless the two communities were clearing the thorny path of mutual unity when their efforts were arrested and progress blocked by the pioneer torch-bearers of modern Western civilization who set their foot on the Indian soil and by

shrewd observation of facts as then existed noticed the wide rift between the two great Indian communities.

Had not the British Power accentuated it, this rift would have been rapidly closed and the great united Indian Nation would have successfully emerged out of centuries of travail. Now-a-days great emphasis is laid on this rift between the two major Indian communities by interested parties and they are presented to the world as being communities who were constantly at war with each other throughout centuries of their contact. But we have to rewrite, re-read and re-interpret Indian History. What the average man to-day knows as facts of history are mostly distortions of them done for a greater part consciously to magnify differences and hostilities in Indian life and by such magnification to prevent the emergence of unified Indian nationalism by firing the imagination of different elements in the national life of the country. But history reveals to us that after initial conflicts, a new blending of two cultures was attempted, especially in the North. However, before this attempt materialised new forces in the form of the advent of British power entered the political arena and every attempt at bridging the gulf between them was frustrated. The compact of Western civilisation altogether changed the course of events. Gradually, pushing back all other countries England virtually took over political control of the whole country by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Various factors contributed to this revolutionary phase in the modern Indian history. But chief among them was the lack of mutual understanding between the two great communities inhabiting India. Besides communal division, there was also a lack of foresight among the Indian statesmen of those times who could not see beyond the immediate interests of their individual States and communities and form a political allia-

nce on an all-India scale to crush the growing political influence of the foreigner. This helped to put in power a nation that was the Mistress of the Seas-a nation that was bent upon creating an Empire for itself to convert the natural poverty of the mother country into manufactured richness, drained from other countries of the world. And so England ruled supreme in India, giving crumbs of power to hostile Indian elements and enticing the newly created class of the educated into participating petty administrative jobs. But it was not all smooth-sailing even for the British. Their domination was resented both by the Muslims and Hindus alike, the resentment finally resulting in what can now be admittedly termed the first War of Indian Independence of 1857. Putting aside their mutual antagonism, all elements in the Indian political life took part in that last armed effort to rescue Indian nationalism from foreign domination which was unique in its character and subtle in its ways. Unique in the sense that unlike previous invaders of India, they did not settle in India. They did not make India a colony for adventurers and traders from the mother country and thereby avoided a possible clash like that of the American colonists with the mother country in the eighteenth century. It was subtle in that, as far as possible and practicable, they avoided a display of forcible and physical domination of the country. On the other hand, they created a class of upper strata and professional Indians to do the day-to-day administrative work and generally support the British imperial structure in India. This resulted in subduing initial opposition to their rule and after 1857, their rule was almost accepted as Providential though, sporadic agrarian revolts all over the country and especially in the Deccan took place.

In 1885, almost three decades after the first Indian Independence War, an organization was formed, curiously enough under foreign auspices to give vent to the higher class Indian grievances and to facilitate on a progressive scale their entry into the administrative departments of the Government. This organisation which was in its early years merely a debating body, was destined to be one of the most revolutionary and fighting organisations in India—the Indian National Congress of to-day. It is this organisation that has rescued the spirit of India from its utter annihilation, made the nation proud of its past inheritance and prepared the Indian masses to build up a bright future for all. It gave a stirring call to the Nation to rise above petty internal squabbles, to unite to pursue one aim, to struggle to achieve one goal, Independence. It led the nation through many a fight, took a firm grip of the hearts of the Indian masses, and made the British Imperialism with all its Imperial might tremble and totter to its very foundations. Everyone is acquainted with and proud of the recent history of the Congress. Its efforts to-day have been crowned with singular success.

But as already pointed out above, the British are the most subtle in their ways. When they found that the organisation which was almost of their creation turned revolutionary and took leadership of the Indian masses in revolt against foreign Imperialism they fostered a counter-organisation (The Muslim League) and laid germs of fratricidal war in India. It was a stroke of the most subtle British ingenuity which had noticed the uncompromising character of the warring communities in India at the advent of their power, and now fully alive to the danger for their rule from the growing upsurge of the Indian people, as representated by

the Congress, they let loose forces of disruption and civil war. So far the British have succeeded in their objective–viz. to prevent Hindus and Muslims coming together and forging a united front against them. The muslim League, partly from the ostrich-like assumed ignorance of world conditions and world progressive forces and partly from motives of self-interest and religious fanaticism of medieval type had played so long into British hands.

It has been successful in carving out a Muslim state in India. But now it would be harmful to Muslim interests within and without the Dominion of Pakistan if the League still takes no account of the changing world conditions.

"Old order changeth yielding place to new," and during the last World War these changes have been so fast and so tremendous that those who would not accept, and adapt themselves to these changes are themselves doomed to total extinction–culturally and perhaps even physically. India also does not remain unaffected. Because of progressive world forces, and internal changes in the British social and political systems, the British people have thrown overboard a Conservative regime and put in power a Labour Government having socialistic inclinations and sympathatic attitude towards national movements of other subjugated countries. That Government changed the century old British policy towards India and declared their unequivocal intention of transferring all authority to Indian hands. And yet they could not entirely free themselves of their past Conservative inheritance and even in their new changed policy they have fostered Indian communal differences and other fissiparous tendencies in the Indian political life and made our progress as difficult as possible. Division of the country on religious

basis provides an example of this assertion. Yet we can turn this division into a boon if we pursue a neighbourly policy in our inter-Dominion relations and together play our noble role in the world which has now almost become one. Cultural, religious, regional-all differences are fast sinking. Tremendous possibilities of progress are opened for the whole mankind as such. Man-made differences must be blown up. As Sir S. Radhakrishnan puts it.

"We are parts of a continuing process of history. From the primitive savage to the modern man, human beings have formed larger and larger groups. Families merged into clans, clans into communities, communities into nations and we feel that the time is now ripe for regional and world organisations. We are now in a position to manage technically an ever-widening area of human affairs on a world basis and in the common interest." Further he points out that, "The greatest obstacle in the way is our out-moded social thinking."

It is for achieving this noble goal and removing this obstacle fhat India to-day at this critical juncture on her history, must rise above communal and class-differences and take her due share in human march towards Peace, Progress, and Prosperity. India has a great and glorious past which perhaps no other country can boast of. Two centuries of stunted growth under foreign surveillance have distorted our ideas and vision and have deprived us of the habit of free thinking. But future beckons to us and we have the will to surmont the present difficulties. We have the will to win and we will win despite all the innumerable difficulties in our path towards our cherished goal. The main problem which faces the country to-day is not a political problem of winning

back its freedom. That goal has been achieved.

What shall be the content of that freedom? How shall the political freedom we have achieved help the lowly in our social scale to better their lot?

The more important problem is what kind of freedom is India going to have?

We, as a nation, are at cross-roads and the whole world is on the verge of a new and deepening and perhaps the greatest crisis humanity has ever had occasion to face. Almost three years have elapsed since the successful termination of World-War II; but most of us are as yet groping in the dark and unable to see any ray of light. The grim shadow of perhaps yet another total war is already darkening the international affairs of man and the nations of the world almost seem to be divided into two distinct camps representing two antagonistic idealogies. If an armed clash-between these two idealogies flares up it is certain to engulf the whole civilised world and may perhaps end with the destruction of everything that man in his centuries of existence on this planet has held dear. Material science has equipped man with a double-edged weapon. With one edge of it he has triumphed in his struggle with Nature and has been able to peep into its mysteries. But the improper use of the same weapon may even annihilate him.

Such is the grim international setting into which, after attaining her freedom, India is called upon to render her bit of service. It is the unique claim of the East that her chief service to man's progress and civilisation lies in the fact that she has brought to bear on all human activities, a higher

moral code and higher spiritual values. It must now be the self-appointed task of India to make the world unlearn its excessive reliance on material force and make the higher moral and spiritual values the guiding principles in all human activities whether communal, national or international, and whether social, economic or political. India has been preaching for centuries past the superiority of mind over matter, of soul force over material force, the futility of human existence if it is not co-ordinated in all respects. After attainment of freedom it has become the sacred duty and privilege of India to respond to the passionate call of the world in agony. She will have, by example, to make an attempt to reconcile the different ideologies that now distinguish between man and man, between one country and another and divide the world into two hostile armed camps. To aspire to assume such a leading role India will herself have to reconcile her own internal differences and petty squabbles and unitedly march forward unfettered towards Freedom, Peace and Progress.

The following pages relate briefly the story of the grim battle Indian nationalism has had to fight against British imperialism. The concluding chapter deals with the pressing problems--political, constitutional, social and economic--that face the two Dominions in India. With courage, understanding tolerance and sympathy, these problems are not very difficult of solution which will make India the land of the American poet, Denis A. McArthy's dream:

"*This is the land where hate should die*"

No feuds of faith, no spleen of race,
No darkly brooding fear should try

Beneath our flag to find a place.
Lo ! every people here has sent
Its sons to answer freedom's call;
Their life-blood is the strong cement
That builds and binds the Nation's wall.

"This is the land where hate should die."

Though dear to me my faith and shrine,
I serve my country best when I
Respect the creeds that are not mine.
He little loves his land who'd cast
Upon his neighbour's word a doubt
From present rights to bar him out.

"This is the land where hate should die."

This is the land where strife should cease,
Where foul suspicious fear should fly
Before the light and love and peace.
Then let us purge from poisoned thought
That service to the State we give
And so be worthy as we ought
Of this great land in which we live.*

* From Harijan 26 Jan. 1947

CHAPTER I.
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
(1885-1919)

Every honest thinker who has the welfare of all India at heart is puzzled at the enormity of the problems facing India. He has to provide conclusive answers to a number of querries. Are we a Nation ? Are we two Nations or more than that ? Are we to accept the present communal partition of the country as a permanent one and resign ourselves to what one may be tempted to call a sore in our body politic ? Should our present Provincial boundaries be retained or changed ? If they are to be changed what principles should govern us in the setting-up of new Provincial boundaries ? Should the Provinces be linguistic or should they be communal ? What should be the position of Indian States ? Should they be retained as centres of autocratic rule ? Should they be absorbed in the neighbouring Provinces ? Or should they be territorially retained as at present but full-fledged democracy introduced in their governments, with the present rulers as constitutional heads ? Should there be one strong Central Government over-riding Provincial units ? What fundamental principles should govern the future Indian society ? On what lines are we going to solve our economic problems ? What shall be our relations with the world outside ?

Before we tackle these problems which appear difficult of solution to-day it is imperative that we enquire as to how these problems ever cropped up. Some of these problems are the result of our connection with Great Britain while others reflect the modern progressive world forces.

This enquiry now takes us to a brief survey of the expansion of British Imperialism in India.

Before the English colonists and traders in the 16th century spread out to various distant corners of the world, the Dutch, the Portuguese and the Spanish had monopolised the foreign trade of the Continent of Europe and had amassed such enormous wealth from their flourishing trade that it aroused the jealousy of their English rivals–the merchants of the City of London. By the decisive defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, the English naval supremacy was established and world naval trade routes were opened to the English. Individual merchants undertook the profitable trade with the the East. But to the English merchants the Eastern trade seemed too great a venture for individual enterprise. Therefore, the Lord Mayor of London on September 22, 1599 called a meeting of prominent London citizens; in which meeting it was decided to form a trading company and the East India Company, thus, was formally incorporated on December 31, 1600. In the beginning the Company traded in merchandise of pepper, cloves, etc. from the East Indies—the lucrative Spice–Islands of those times. But the Dutch who had fortifications on those Islands resented the English enterprise and encroachment in the sphere of their influence and as they were in a position, from a military point of view, to dictate terms to the English, a treaty between Holland and England was concluded in favour of the former in 1619. As a consequence of this treaty the English trade with the East Indies sank into insignificance and the massacre of all the English merchants at Amboyna in 1623 left the English no alternative but to seek new trade-centres in other countries and leave the Islands in virtual monopoly of Holland. So now, the

English merchants had to pay greater attention ro their Indian trade. At Surat they had secured a trade-charter and established their factory in 1613, which event laid the foundation of their Empire in India. The acquisition of India by the East India Company in the 18th and 19th centuries was a gradual process. That the British were acquiring political power was not even suspected by the chief Indian powers. When Imperial Delhi was weakening the East India Company acquired territory after territory but assumed the airs that they were taking over control as "Agents" of the Moghul Emperor and were administering the territories in that capacity. As late as 1835 they were minting coins in the name of the Emperor. Thus a Trading Company which was in India since the beginning of the 17 th century on the sufferance of Indian rulers was gradually acquiring power and was establishing nuclii of British rule in India. Surat (1613), Madras (1626), Bombay (1662) and later on Calcutta (1692) became centres of British power in India from where it could spread its tentacles all over the country. With the fall of the Moghul Empire, Delhi was synonymous with anarchy. The Marathas –the only Indian power that could claim hegemony over the ruined Empire–were themselves weakened by internal strife and were inefficent in administration for lack of strong and overriding central authority. They were wanting in the adminstrative capacity and experience to rule over such a large territory. They were a fighting people and on various battle-fields they had proved their metal. But administrators they never were. Moreover they were also lacking in strategy. They spread their armies far and wide. In those days of difficult communications their armies at times were more than a thousand miles from their capital. But while they

were engaged in distant fights they totally neglected their neighbouring enemies-such as the Nizam of Hyderabad -whom they many times defeated but whose territory they never annexed. Strategically and administratively the the Marathas proved inferior to the British and so the latter gradually brought under their control district after district, liquidating one power after another, acquiring paramountcy over one State after another and thus finally establishing their suzerainty all over India. The passing of political domination in India into British hands was without parallel. Pandit Nehru says,:

" The coming of the British made a vital difference and old system was uprooted in many ways. They brought an entirely different impulse from the West which had slowly developed in Europe from the times of the Renaissance and political Revolution in England, and was taking shape in the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. The American and French Revolutions were to carry this further. The British remain outsiders, aliens, and misfits in India and made no attempt to be otherwise. Above all, for the first time in India's history her political control was exercised from outside and her economy was centred in a distant place. They made India a typical colony of the modern age, a subject country for the first time in her long history."

The British imperial lust was not satisfied by obtaining political control over such a vast land as India. Political control was not an end in itself. It was a means for acquiring areas of raw materials and market for selling manufactured goods. Burma with its inviting rice-fields and unexploited oil fields, was the next natural victim of the expanding British

imperialism. The British found some pretext or other for acquiring Burman territory and in 1885–the very year of the birth of Indian nationalism in the form of the Indian National Congress–they liquidated the native Burman monarchy and annexed the whole of Burma to their Indian Empire.

Thus a process which began in the 17th century around Surat and St. Fort (Madras) was completed and the British ruled supreme since then over a vast area of land measuring 2000 miles in length and breadth. The acquisition of political power by the British ushured in a new era in Indian history. The village life in India began to disintegrate. British trade followed the British flag and enormous quantities of manufactured cheap products and more especially cloth, poured in to the Indian market to the disadvantage of the indigenous products. Cloth manufactured on vast scale in England was cheaper and finer than the hand-spun and hand-woven cloth of the Indian weaver. The Indian coarser and costlier cloth rapidly disappeared from the Indian market. This revolutionalised the Indian village life. A class of the village unemployed, formerly engaged in handicrafts was created. For want of village industries this class had more and more to rely on land which increased the propotionate burden on it. Pandit Nehru aptly describes this change in the following terms:

"The destruction of crafts and village industries, originally deliberately undertaken under early British rule, nd later resulting from a new colonial economy, led a vast number of these artisans and craftsmen, more especially, the weavers, being deprived of their occupations and livelihood. Those who survived this catastrophe drifted to the land and became landless labourers or shared a tiny patch of land with their relatives."

The disintegration of village industries along with the loss of political power resulted in a wide-spread discontent in India and brought about in 1857 "The Mutiny" which was the last armed effort to oust power from the British hands. This attempt was crushed and defeated but the British took a lesson from it and altogether stopped the policy of annexation of Indian States. They also disarmed the Indian population and thus prevented future possibility of an armed uprising in India. The East India Company was also deprived of its political rights in the country and all the Government of the country was taken over directly by the British Parliament. India almost for the first time in her modern history was ruled by one power and through one strong Central Government. The political repercussions of this change in the system of the Government were as characterestic as they were in the economic field noted above. The British administration was perhaps the most costly in the world and it was natural considering the ultimate objective of British rule in India. They looked upon India as a field of economic exploitation and took away from the land as much as they could in the form of money and material. The costs of the Afghan and Burma campaigns waged in the interest of the growing British Empire as well as the costs of the Mutiny supression (which amounted to about Rs. 40 crores) were all exacted from the Indian treasury. All this economic exploitation tragically affected the Indian peasantry.

The industrial era was yet to dawn and the great Indian textile, jute and iron centres were just then in the making. At that time they had a very limited absorbive capacity for the immigrant village labour. The British policy with regard to Indian industry was certainly discourageous and even anto-

gonistic. They would allow no import of modern machinery in India. They flooded the Indian market with British goods and textiles. This resulted in the unemployment of millions of Indian weavers and artisans. No means of livelihood were left to them and they were simply starved to death. "The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India," wrote Lord Bentick in 1834. Those who escaped death turned to land. The burden on land thus increased and resulted in small uneconomic holdings. Before the advent of British rule and economy the percentage of the population dependent on agriculture was about fiftyfive but the destruction of village handicraft and textile industry increased it gradually until recent times to about eighty percent. With the increase of small uneconomic holdings agricultural indebtedness increased and ownership of the land passed from actual tillers to the money-lending class. All this precipitately led to the horrible poverty of the masses.

The British Government never favoured any revolutionary agrarian reforms. The main stay of the British power in India was the newly educated class of Indians. This class was rapidly absorbed in the Government service for administrative purposes because without their help the administration of such a vast country was impossible. The first generation of this class almost hailed the British rule as Providential and beneficial to India. They exhorted their Indian brethren to take as much advantage as possible of the new system of education and diverted the attention of the "Elite" of Indians from political to the social field.

Many social evils existed in Hindu and Muslim communities of the time. The earlist social reform, thanks to that

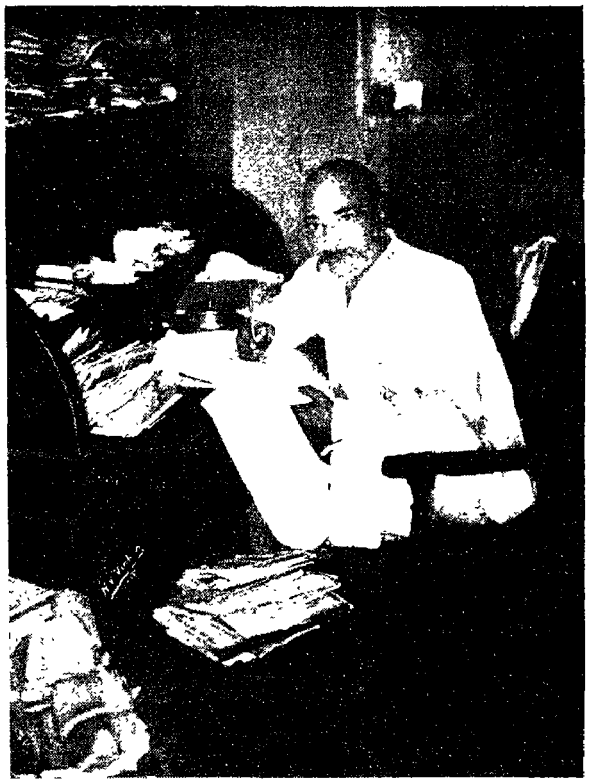
ardent social worker, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was the abolition of "Sutee" (burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of her husband). The educated Indians also agitated for such other reforms as re-marriage of widows, their education and abolition of various other out-moded customs including the purdah-system then prevailing in India. All this agitation chiefly affected the upper strata of the Indian community while the plight of the masses grew worse year by year due to the disintegration of ancient village life and destruction of village handicraft. The economic burden of the costly British administration chiefly lay on the shoulders of the Indian peasantry and it had nowhere to look for its relief and uplift. The Indian peasantry under the British rule became a mass of survile humanity, under-fed and under-clad. The following presentation of Irish conditions was equally applicable to India also.

"One by one, each of her nascent industries was either strangled at its birth or handed over gagged and bound to the jealous custody of the rival interst in England, until at last every fountain of wealth was hermetically sealed so that the whole nation was thrown on the land." *

Thus the vast masses of the Indian population living in villages had to rely more and more for their livelihood on land. This class was the hardest hit economically under the British rule. Consequently in many Provinces they revolted against the alien rule which was responsible for their plight: in Maharashtra under Vasudeo Balwant Phadke; in U.P. at Bareilly in 1894; Santals in C.P. (1855—1871) Indigo-producers in

* (Mr Arthur Balfour speaking on Ireland, quoted by R. P. Karandikar at the Bombay Congress in 1904)

LOK. B. G. TILAK



Father of the Indian Unrest

Born 23rd July 1856

Died 1st August 1920

Bengal (1860); the kisans of Chota Nagpur (1898—1900).

While the Indian peasantry was engaged in its struggle with the British Government in India, the "elite" of the Indians,—the city-dwellers and the newly educated—were chiefly preoccupied with the grievances, mostly social, of their class and engaged themselves in the eradication of those social evils. All the problems of those days of untempered British rule with which the Indian leaders were chiefly concerned were not the graievances of the masses but only of the classes. Not that there existed no cause for mass grievances but a sharp distinction was created in the Indian public life: city-dwellers as against the vast masses of the Indian peasantry, the educated as against the unsophisticated, the illiterate. The latter finding themselves voiceless, deserted by their own elders, gave vent to their grievances in a more violent form. At that time there was perhaps only one man of genius and far-sight who could take a grasp of the situation and correctly diagnose the causes of prevalent evils. That man was the late revered Lokamanya Tilak, "the father of the Indian unrest." While almost all other Indian leaders of the time were chiefly concerning themselves with the eradication of social evils it was only Lokamanya Tilak who correctly laid stress on the fact that unless political power rested in the Indian hands, no amount of social uplift would ameliorate the pitiable condition of the Indian masses. Chiefly because of his incessant efforts and teaching that the people, especially in the Deccan, grew politically conscious and a new spirit of self-help and self-reliance inspired them.

The British are very shrewd in reading the sings of time and forestalling disadvantageous and dangerous situations. They perceived that a new political era was dawning in India

and unless they took firm action their rule in India would be seriously jeopardised. But they had the fresh vivid memories of 1857 and forswore themselves from taking any direct, violent and drastic action. Instead they hit upon a very bright idea of canalizing the agitation and energies of Indian leaders towrds social uplift of their own class, and providing a "safety-valve" for their political agitation. Thus the idea of forming an India-wide organisation to provide a common platform for Indian politicians from all over the country was conceived. It was Mr. A. O. Hume who originally conceived this idea and then obtained official blessing for it. The following quotation from Mr. W. C. Bannerji's "Introduction to India" throws light on circumstances in which this organisation, The Indian National Congress, was started He writes :—

> "It will paobabaly be news to many that The Indian National Congress, as it was originally started and it has since been carried on, is in reality the work of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava when that nobleman was the Governor General of India. Mr. A. O. Hume, C.B., had in 1884, conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to India if leading Indian politicians could be brought together once a year to discuss social matter and be upon friendly footing with one another. He did not desire that politics should form part of their discussion. His idea further was that the Governor of the Province where the politicians met should be asked to preside over their deliberations, and that thereby great cordiality should be established between the official classes and the non-official Indian politicians. Full of these ideas he saw the noble Marquis when he went to Simla early in 1885, after Lord Dufferin had in the December previous assumed the Viceroyalty of India

Lord Dufferin took great interest in the matter and after considering over it for some time he sent for Mr. Hume and told him that, in his opnion, Mr. Hume's project could not be of much use. He said there was no body of persons in this country who perfomed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England The newspapers, even if they really represented the views of the people, were not reliable and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in Native circles, it would be very desirable in their interest as well as the interests of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved, and he added that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the Local Governor, for in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds. Mr. Hume was convinced by Lord Dufferin's arguments and when he placed the two schemes, his own and Lord Dufferin's, before leading politicians in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of the country, the latter unanimously accepted Lord Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it. Lord Dufferin had made it a condition that his name in connexion with the scheme of the Congress should not be divulged so long as he remained in the country, and his condition was faithfully maintained and none but the men consulted by Mr. Hume knew anything about the matter."

The first session of the Congress was held on 28th December, 1885 in Bombay and from then onwards it has continuously met in annual sessions at various places in India. The Congress in its infancy was a mere annual gathering of distinguished Indians whose political aspirations were deemed satisfied by passing resolutions and petitioning the Government and sending deputations to the British

Parliament. These leaders instead of turning towards problems of Indian masses chiefly concerned themselves with putting forth such demands as would give their class a more substantial share in the administration of the country. This is evident from the early resolutions such as those requesting the simultaneous holding of the I.C.S. examination, both in England and in India, passed from year to year at the annual sessions of the Congress. These leaders had perfect faith in the generous character of the English people and firm belief in the English Liberal traditions of the nineteenth century as represented and championed by such noteworthy and prominent English statesmen as Gladstone and his companions and successors. The Congress was chiefly dominated by Moderate leaders and in those days it shunned taking the leadership of the masses lest it might offend the English masters. This self-centred attitude of the Indian leadership lasted almost towards the end of the nineteenth century. During its first twenty years of existence the Congress nad never put forth any claims to self-government for India. It restricted itself to the demand of expansion of the existing Legislative Councils, both Provincial and Imperial, so as to facilitate the entry and inclusion of more Indian element in them. Since 1861 miniature representative character was introduced into the Provincial Legislative Councils and representative Local Bodies were set up. The Congress demand as formulated in its resolutions from time to time was for the creation of such Legislative Councils in Provinces where they did not exist and the expansion of Indian representation in such Councils as already were in existence. Third resolution of 1884 Congress session stated:—

"That this Congress considers the reforms and expansion of the Supreme and existing local legislative councils by the admission of a considerable proportion of elected members (and the creation of similar Councils for the N. W. Provinces and Audh, and also for Punjab) essential; and holds that all Budgets should be referred to these Councils for consideration, their members being moreover empowered to interpellate the Executive in regard to all branches of the administration and that a Standing Committee of the House of Commons should be constituted to receive and consider any formal protests that may be recorded by majorities of such Councils against the exercise by the Executive of the power which would be vested in it, of over-ruling the decision of such majorities."

The Congress had also proposed a greater degree of representation within the system of British Government itself and also demanded the right to elect members to the Provincial Councils to be conferred only "on those classes and members of the communities, prima facie, capable of exercising it wisely and independently" and wanted to restrict the franchise to the members of the Municipalities, District Boards, Chambers of Commerce and the Universities. *

This demand, which was the chief political demand of the Congress in its earlier years, was characterstic of the class which then dominated the Congress. The Congress leaders of the time had also the pious hope "that India can never be well or justly governed nor her people prosperous or contented, until they are allowed, through their elected representatives a potential voice in the Legislatures of their own country" †

* Vide: resolution IV (2), 1886 Congress Session
† Vide: Resolution II, 1894 Congress Session

Thus it becomes evident from these resolutions that what the early Congress leaders demanded was not a complete transfer of political power to Indian hands but a substantial share in the administration of the country under the protecting wing of the British Commonwealth of Nations. They believed that India's destiny was linked with Great Britain and other Dominions within the British Commonwealth and India would be much profited if she elected to remain within this Commonwealth of Nations. But even these Moderate leaders were soon to be disillusioned. The Government's repressive policy towards the end of the 19th century and their reactionary methods employed in the handling of the Indian problems, as also their irresponsive attitude towards even such modest demands as were put forth by the Congress, soon exasperated the Indian leaders. It should not be surmised from the moderate tendencies of these leaders that they were reactionaries. On the contrary, they were the Nation's vanguard in its freedom struggle. They have played a progressive role in the emancipation of the country from foreign bondage. Side by side with their political agitation they also carried on work for social reform, for educational progress and for industrial and agricultural development of the country.

On their disillusionment the Congress leaders broke away with their past hesitancy and adopted a new method in the their political agitation and gave a new vision and a new idealogy to the Movement. Dadabhai Nowrojee, the Grand Old Man of India, in his Presidential address (Calcutta Congress, 1906) declared from the Congress platform India's inherent right for complete freedom (Swaraj). The following passage is very illustrative of the Congress attitude since

1906 and its gradual break with the past :-

> "He (Dadabhai) claimed for Indians in India all the control that Englishmen had in England. This was a necessity, in order to remedy the great economic evil which was at the root of Indian poverty. It was 'absolutely necessary' for the progress and welfare of the Indian people. 'The whole matter can be comprised in one word, Self-Government, or Swaraj, like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies'. When should a beginning be made which should automatically develop into full Self-Government? At once. 'Not only has the time fully arrived, but had arrived long past.'" *

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth a new cult of terrorism and violence was spreading throughout India and the Government were meeting it with full repressive measures. Sporadic terrorist acts were met with full-fledged Governmental terror on a mass scale. The Indian middle-class-the class which always forms the vanguard of revolutionary movements in every subject country-was smarting under repressive laws passed in succesion, such as the Press-Act (1878), the Arms Act. (1889) the Seditious Meetings Act (1906) etc. The expression of free opinion, which is the fundamental democratic right of every people and recognised as such by every civilised Government, was denied to the Indian people. No legitimate and constitutional means of agitation were open to leaders of the Indian opinion and therefore the youth of the country were attracted to the underground political activities similar to those in Ireland and Russia. In Ireland and Russia murders of the members of the ruling class served as 'shock-tactics' to bring home to the rulers that the freedom-

* 'How India wrought for Freedom' p. 445 by Annie Besant.

urge of the subject people, under no circumstances could be suppressed. The Indian youth also tried to emulate the example of the Irish and Russian terrorists and murderous assaults on the British personnnel of the Indian Civil Service followed one another in quick succession in various parts of the country. Special ordinances were promulgated to meet this situation and especially in Bengal where what came to be known as the "Bomb Cult" was the most active and threatening the Government adopted severe methods and batches after batches of the Bengal terrorists were deported to the Andaman Islands converting those Islands into the Indian Siberia. This period has left a characteristic impression on the movement of the Indian struggle for freedom. During this period we perceive a new progressive element introduced in the struggle by way of the Congress becoming a fighting organisation and directly challenging the Government. The Extremist group in the National movement forged a new economic weapon in the struggle for freedom – the weapon of economic boycott of British goods which was proclaimed on August 7, 1905. During the same year Indian national aspirations rose high due to the defeat of Tzarist Russia by Japan (1905), the first modern victory of an Asiatic over a European power. The Japanese victory was hailed by the Nationalist India as it blew up sky-high the myth of superiority of the European races over the Asiatic. The whole National movement was enthused with a new flood of inspiration and vigour. There appeared a strong probability of the Nationalist India closing its ranks and storming the strong fortress of British Imperialism in India. To this wave of national enthusiasm a strong and new impetus was given by the Government in the form of their declaration to

partition Bengal. The British Government apprehended that this new upsurge of the Indian masses might defeat the ends of their policy in India and so they launched a counter-offensive against the National movement by the introduction of a new communal element in the national life of the country. Lord Curzon, then the Viceroy of India was bent upon following a reactionary policy in the teeth of national opposition and his repressive methods led the disappointed among the Indian educated youth to underground activities and terrorism. Various conspiracies were brought to light and Mr. V. D. Savarkar, the leader of Indian terrorists residing in England was arrested (1908), brought to India tried, convicted and sentenced to transportation for life. A responsible political organisation that the Congress was, it had to take cognizance of the growing violent atmosphere in the country and the methods employed by the Government in the ruthless suppression of terrorist activities. Rash Bihari Ghose, the Congress President in 1908, had to refer to the "succession of repressive laws and deportations under a lawless law." He had to concede that "secret crime", meaning thereby terrorist activities, was the natural result of repressive laws. He warned the Government that "coercion and even the appearance of coercion tend to create only distrust and suspicion."

The Government's insistence on the Bengal Partition invoked nation-wide opposition to it and it is worthwhile to study the anti-Partition Movement in view of the recent partition of the Province carried out with the approval of the same nationalists who had denounced any partition scheme of the Province forty years ago.

The Bengal Partition.

The partition of Bengal took effect from October, 16, 1905 despite vehement protests from all over the country. Bengal is one of the oldest Hindu Kingdoms whose geographical unity was retained under the Mohammedan as well as the early British rule. The Muslim rulers had respected its time-honoured frontiers and had left them unaltered. The civilisation of Bengal is of the highest character and also it is one of the most ancient ones in India. Ancient Bengal contained four great cities around which was centred her political system: they were—Gaur, Bikrampur, Navadweep and Mahasthan. These cities were the most populous ones in the early period of Christian Era—the population of Gaur exceeding one million. The Pal kings of Bengal were the most famous amongst the Indian dynasties. Bengal had contributed to a great extent to the progress of civilisation and culture in India in the past and during recent times it has produced the highest type of philosophers, mystics, scientists, literary men and politicians such as Swami Ram Krishna Paramahans, Swami Vivekanand, Arabind Ghosh Surendranath Bannerji, Rabindranath Tagore, and others–the cream of humanity. These men and others in Bengal of their class did not belong to Bengal alone. They did not belong even to India alone. The whole civilised world has a right to claim them. For these men themselves transcended all provincial and national frontiers and looked upon the whole humanity as one—discovering unity in diversity, symphony in apparent chaos. Bengal is, then, the homeland of such noble culture and traditions that were able to produce such eminent personalities in all walks of life and all Ben-

galis, irrespective of caste or creed, entertained intense national feelings of political unity and profoundly believed in the community of their interests, traditions, language and culture. However, these feelings were outraged by the Indian Government during Lord Curzon's administration by announcing the partition of Bengal and carrying it out without respect for public opinion in the matter.

According to the Census report of 1901, the area and population figures of Bengal proper and what then were known as the Lower Provinces of Bengal were as follows:—

	Area Sq. Miles.	Population.
Bengal Proper	79,068	42,943,325
Orissa	9,841	4,343,150
Assam	52,959	5,841,878
Total.....	141,868	53,128,353
Bihar	35, 532	21, 547, 538
Chhota Nagpur	32, 433	6, 710, 116
Total.....	67, 965	28, 257, 654

For administrative purposes, this was undoubtedly a large Province and its division was unavoidable. The people had no objection whatsoever if the division was carried out without disrupting Bengal proper. For instance Bihar could not be said to be culturally linked with Bengal. The language of the former Province is entirely different from that of the latter. The Bihari language is as much influenced by Hindi as by Persian and is a synthetic one while Bengali is an analytic tongue deriving its inspiration from Sanskrit. The separation of these two Provinces would not have been resented by the

people. However, what was contemplated was not the division according to the the people's wishes; but a division of Bengal proper into two; allocating twenty-five millions of its population to Eastern Bengal with Dacca as its capital and eighteen millions to the Western Bengal with Calcutta as its capital. The very idea of such a division was hateful to the people. This was an artificial division which did not take into account Bengal's ancient linguistic, racial, cultural and geographical unity. Even the high-ranking British officials were deadly set against such a division; instead they supported the idea of separation of Bihar and Chhota Nagpur. When the Judges of the High Court of Calcutta, as for back as 1896 were consulted with regard to the proposed division they expressed their dissent to the proposal. They remarked, "The Judges apprehend that what is required of them is an expression of their opinion as to how the change, if carried out, would affect the administration of civil and criminal justice.....The proposal seems to the Judges to be a step in the wrong direction. To transfer districts which, ever since the East India Company assumed administration, have formed a part of the regulation territory, cannot but appear in the light of retrograde movement.....It seems to the Judges, therefore, that a transfer of Chittagong division to the Government of Assam as at present constituted would not fail to be a mischievous step."

It is curious and illustrative to note that even some members of the British Parliament, who had intimate knowledge of the Bengal conditions, were opposed to the Partition Scheme.

When the question of the partition of Bengal first came before Parliament for discussion five members o

Parliament warned Mr. Morley, the then Secretary of State for India, that the proposal of division was reactionary in all its aspects, and if persisted in, was fraught with political danger. These were Sir Henry Cotton, K. C. S. I., lately Chief Secretary of Bengal and Chief Commissioner of Assam, Mr. Donald Smeaton, C. S. I., lately member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council; Sir John Jardine, K. C. I. E., lately chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay; Mr Hart Davis, a distinguished Bombay officer; and Mr C. J. O'Donnel, Even the conservative British Press in India protested against the partition move. 'The Englishman,' the chief conservative organ in Calcutta, strongly warned the Government, stating:

> "The Government can hardly be in very much doubt as to the popularity of its proposals to dismember the Province of Bengal, and especially those of them which refer to the transference of Dacca and Mymensing to the Province of Assam. The Proposals for partition have been attacked in every key and every language. They are repugnant alike to sentiment and to commonsense. They are opposed by every community, and by every section of each community. And within the threatened districts themselves they have awakened a storm of passionate protest which has surprised those who have led it. No still, small voice has been upraised on behalf of the Government. If it had, it would only have emphasised the deafening clamour of protecting interests. Really a casual observer might think that the Government had pondered over the best means of stirring up its subjects in Bengal, and had selected this as the quickest and most amusing manner of setting the Province in a ferment." *

* Jan. 23, 1904, Englishman, Calcutta.

'The Pioneer,' another conservative paper of Calcutta justifying part of Partition Scheme, condemned the severance of Dacca and Mymensing districts from the Calcutta administration,

> "The case is altogether different as regards the Dacca and Mymensing districts. They can gain no possible advantage by being cut off from Bengal, and by the severance of the strong ties which bind them to Calcutta. They are both districts of importance, second to none in Bengal either in respect of education or wealth. Both of these districts have been subject to the administration of Bengal from Calcutta from the earliest days of the British occupation."*

The idea behind the Partition was to create a division among the Indian communities by conferring official favour on one community against the other. This is borne out by the following excerpt from Sir Risley's letter.–

> "The boundary suggested for partition would bring within the Eastern Province the bulk of the characteristic Muhamadans of Bengal who form 78% of the population in Rajashahi, 50% in Dinajpur, and 48% in Malda. Not only would it give Dacca a central position in relation to the rest of the new Province but it would tend in course of time, to corfer on that city the special character of a Provincial capital, where Muhamadan interests would be strongly represented, if not predominant." †

Even the Muslim opinion was against this partition and it was certainly hostile to the 'Curzon policy' of divide and

* Jan. 13, 1904, Pioneer, Calcutta.

† The Home Secretary, Sir Herbert Risley's letter dated 13th Sep. 1904

rule. Hon. Mr. Chaudhari, an ex-member of the Legislative Council of Bengal, described that the 'Curzon policy' was "to drive the wedge between Hindu and Muhamadan." Further he stated it to be Lord Curzon's conviction "that India could only be held on the basis of racial animosity. He feared that a rapprochement between Hindu and Muhamadan would be fatal, for underneath the old antagonism there was developing a sort of political unity. The whole Curzon official attitude is directed to feeding the racial fires. That is the reason," he emphasised "for the Partition of Bengal to carve a Muhamedan State out of one which, as a whole, was Hindu; to set up in Dacca a rival Muhamadan centre to the Hindu centre of Calcutta. The idea runs through all the Curzon tradition. Foster Muhamadanism at the expense of Hinduism. Where Muhamadanism is weak the rights of minority must be sustained; where it is strong the rule of the majority must prevail."

Nawab Sayyad Amir Hussain C. I. E., Hon. Secretary, the Central Mussalman Association, Calcutta, addressed a protest to the Government in these words:

> "The Committee of Mohamadan Association which has its branches all over Bengal are not in favour of any change in the territorial limits of the Province. My Committee are of opinion that no portion of the Bengali speaking race should be separated from Bengal without the clearest necessity for such separation, and they think such necessity does not exist.....One of the arguments for not transferring Orissa from Bengal, as stated in Mr. Risley's letter, is that the prescription of a century is difficult to break, and I beg to point out that it is still more difficult to break the prescription of many centuries."

All over Bengal many public meetings were held in

protest of the Partition Scheme and many of them were presided over by prominent Muslim personalities in the Bengal public life. The only dissentient voice was that of Nawab Salimullah of Dacca. He supported the idea of partition as envisaged and carried out by Lord Curzon. But the reason for his support was purely personal. He had large landed estates in and around Dacca. If Dacca became the centre of the new Province of Eastern Bengal, then naturally the value of his estates would be enhanced. Moreover, it was also known that the Government of India had granted him a loan of £ 20,000 and also nominated him to the Viceroy's Legislative Council. In return for these favours bestowed on him by the Government he became the most loyal and enthusiastic supporter of the Partition Scheme. Except this solitary instance the Government was unable to procure any substantial measure of support from the Muslim community of Bengal.

The Indian National Congress also disapproved of this sinister move of Partition. It strongly condemned the Partition Scheme in its resolution in 1905 in these words:—

> "Resolved that this Congress records its emphatic protest against the Partition of Bengal in the face of the strongest opposition on the part of the people of the Province.
>
> That having regard to the intense dissatisfaction felt by the entire Bengali community at the dismemberment of their Province and their manifest disinclination to accept the partition as an accomplished fact, this Congress appeals to the Government of India and to the Secretary of State to reverse or modify the arrangement made in such a manner as to conciliate the public opinion and allay the excit-

ement and unrest manifest among large masses of the people.

That this Congress recommends the adoption of some arrangements which would be consistant with administrative efficiency and would place the entire Bengali community under one and undivided administration either by the appointment of the Governor and Council or by the adoption of some other administrative arrangement that may be thought desirable."

From the above exhaustive quotations it would be seen that all sections in the public life in Bengal as well as all over India and even members of Parliament and the British conservative Press in India condemned this measure of partition. But the Government was firm in its resolution to carry the Partition Scheme through and resorted to ruthless supression of every form of agitation, banning processions, public meetings, and even the singing of the National Anthem (Vande Mataram). They also adopted the policy of either incitng the feelings of one community against the other to provoke communal riots or where such feelings were already in existence, to take no steps to check the unhealthy growth of such feelings and consequent riots. A pamphlet which then came to be known as the 'Red Pamphlet' was freely distributed among the Muslim population. The author of this pamphlet was anonymous. This pamphlet represented the Hindus as 'inhuman oppressors' who had robbed the Muslims of their honour and wealth. Mr. Barniville, C. S., the sub-divisional officer of Jamalpur, in his report on the Melanda Hat riot, observed, "that some Mussalmans proclaimed that the Government had permitted them to loot the Hindus." At another place he stated, that

"these outrages (referring to an abuduction case in which the accused were Muslims) were due to the announcement that the Government had permitted the Muhamadans to marry Hindu widows in Nika-form" — i. e. as second wives or concubines. The Government remained purposely apathatic in all such cases and this attitude of the Government towards Indian Nationalism dealt a deadly blow to the trust and confidence placed in British liberalism. So long the Indian leaders were hoping that the Liberal Party, which was the only progressive party in England at that time, would be more sympathatic towards Indian national aspirations. But when that Party came in power it also acquiesced in the Partition of Bengal and refused to disturb the "settled fact" of the Bengal Partition. The disillusionment of Indian leaders was complete. Bengali, one of the leading Indian Journals of Calcutta, wrote:-

> We have come to the conclusion, and even sceptics have been converted to the view, that the principles of Liberalism are not meant for India, and that to us it is immaterial whether Liberals or Conservatives are in power. There is but one party which governs India — in which all distinctions between Liberals and Conservatives and Unionists are merged — it is, the party of reaction, the party of prestige and of 'settled facts' — the party which will not reconsider a mistake, admitted as such, on the ground that it is a settled fact, and which will not hesitate to set at naught the elementary principles of justice, and in the name of State-emergency to trample underfoot one of the most sacred of personal rights, the right of the subject to be heard before he is condemned. The disillusionment has come. We have to recast our estimate of English politics and of English public men. The shock is great. It cannot fail

to breed an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, and create misgivings in the public mind even with regards to the measure of Government initiated with the best of motives. To-day we stand in the unhapppy position of having lost all faith in both the political parties in England. If Mr. Morley can act so, what may we not expect of others, of men who have never cared for principles in politics and who have made office the aim of their ambition? This is the one sentimet which is now uppermost in our minds. It is a great wrench when old-standing and long-cherished ideals are torn from their roots and cast aside as images of clay. But to-day this is the mental attitude of the educated class throughout India. They have lost all faith in the Liberal Party."

With such disillusionment and frustration came resentment and the anti-partition movement grew in strength day by day. Some sporadic terrorist acts were also committed and the Govrnment dealt with an iron hand with all this agitation and terrorism. A section of the Indian leadership headed by Lok. Tilak, Lala Lajpatrai and others while disapproving of the terrorist acts, strongly warned the Government that sympathatic attitude and not the 'iron hand' methods were required in dealing with them. These leaders were in sympathy with the objective of the terrorists and also admired their personal courage, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. The other Congres leaders, like Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and G. K. Gokhale, condemned the terrorists outright and favoured the old moderate policy of the Congress. They desired no change in the Congress attitude towards the Government and hoped to attain for India the status of equality with other Dominions of the British Commonwealth of Nations by keep-

ing themselves in line with the Government policy and devoting themselves more particularly to social uplift and constitutional methods of political agitation. They believed in the doctrine of self-government by stages while the extremist leadership of the Congress was impatient of the Government policy. They had lost all faith in British liberalism. The Congress Session at Calcutta (1906) was a atriumph for the Extremists in as much as they succeeded in getting the following resolution on the Boycott Movement passed at this Session:-

> "Resolved-That having regard to the fact that the people have little or no voice in its administration and that their representations to the Government do not receive due consideration, this Congress is of opinion that the Boycott Movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the partition of that province, was and is, legitimate."

Thus by this resolution the movement in Bengal received official Congress sanction. Along with the Boycott movement Swadeshi and National Education also received country-wide support in spite of Government's professed hostility to these two nation-building activities. The Government had blundered into the Bengal partition beccause they miscalculated the sound patriotism of Muslim masses in Bengal. However, when public opinion of all shades in India presented a united front against the partition they almost sought to rectify their error in judgment. The Royal visit of George V in 1911 presented such an opportunity and taking advantage of it, the annulment of the Partition was announced. Thus the National Movement achieved its first victory over the reactionary forces of British imperialism and autocracy in India. The Government, however, would not take this defeat lying down for simultaneously with the Partition scheme they had two other import-

atnt schemes up their sleeves to drive a wedge into the united front of the Nationalists—the one of sponsoring the Muslim League * and the other of introducing the system of separate electorates for Indian Muslims. There occurred also, at this critical juncture in the National movement a split in the Congress rank weakening the solidarity of the nationalists. This split was an important landmark in the history of India's struggle for emancipation from foreign bondage in as much as it was the result of the greater emphasis the Extremist leadersbip despite the opposition of Moderate leaders wanted to place on the economic boycott of British goods.

Surat Split (1907)

The Moderate group in the Congress was against advocating boycott of British goods and it was intent upon revising the Calcutta resolution on boycott. This was the chief apparent cause of the Surat split. The Nationalists were keen on getting the resolutions passed at Calcutta relating to Self-government, Boycott and National Education repeated and even extended in their scope at Surat where the Congress met on 26th December, 1907. There were signs of split even before it met. A suggestion was mooted out that in place of Rash Behari Ghose, the President-elect, Lala Lajapat Rai, just released after his deportation, should be elected President, "as a protest against his unfair treatment by the Government." But Lalaji declined to accept the Presidentship. On the first day of the session when the Presidential procession was passing a note was handed over to the Chairman of the Reception Committee acquainting him that Lok. Tilak wished " to address the delegates on the proposal of the election of the President after it is seconded. I wish to move an

* See Chapter II

adjournment with a constructive proposal. Please announce me." But when the proceeding started and Surendranath Bannerji completed his speech seconding the proposal for the election of Dr. Ghose, Lok. Tilak's name was not announced. Therefore, he came to the platform and began to address the delegates on his adjournment motion which he said he wanted to move. Thereupon a pandemonium prevailed and the meeting had to be adjourned. The next day a National Convention was called to which admission was restricted; only those delegates being admitted who signed a certain declaration embodying the views of the Moderate Group. This Convention drew up a Constitution for the Indian National Congress in consequence of which the Extremist Group refused to come in, leaving the Moderates entirely in possession of that great organisation. The following two articles of the constitution made it impossible for the Extremists to participate in the National Convention.

"Article I—The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire, and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit, and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country.

Article II — Every delegate to the Indian National Congress shall express in writing his acceptance of the Objects of the Congress as laid down in Article I of this Constitution,

and his willingness to abide by this Constitution, and by the Rules of the Congress hereto appended."

Later on Lok. Tilak was removed from the political field because of his deportation to Mandalay and during his absence his followers practically took no keen interest in the Congress activities. On his release from Mandalay attempts were made to reconcile the two groups. The chief objection of the Extremist group was to the restriction of the right of election to certain organisations, "provided that no such political association or public body can be recognised unless the said Association or Body, by a resolution of a general meeting of its members, expresses its acceptance of the principle embodied in Article I of this Constitution and makes the acceptance of the same condition precedent to new membership." The Bombay session of 1915 altered this provision and threw open the doors of the Congress to the Extremist delegates by allowing them to be elected by "public meetings convened under auspices of any association which is of not less than two years standing on 31st December, 1915 and which has for one of its objects, the attainment of Self-Government within the British Empire by constitutional means." Because of this change Lok. Tilak and his followers re-entered the Congress and thus the split which occurred at Surat was put an end to.

We have noticed above that the first decade of the 20th century was marked by the Indian terroristic activities, the Bengal Partition agitation and unparalleled Governmental repression. The terrorist activities and the National Movement were the outcome of a desparate situation resulting from the British policy towards India. No person with an iota of intelligence ever believed that terrorist activities

would ever be able to free India from foreign bondage. However, they had their place in the Indian freedom struggle as they served the purpose of a stern warning to the rulers that limits of endurance had reached and the Indian people would no longer take things lying down. Lok. Tilak and others tried to base this struggle for freedom on a wider basis and bring in the masses. This they did by advocating boycott of British goods, support to Indian products, National Education and agitating the public opinion to bring pressure on the Government for political reforms. Because of circumstances this agitation was confined chiefly to the middle-classes who were actively interested in politics. Terrorist activities and public agitation by the Congress reached such a height that Government were forced to adopt harsher measures and the 'arch agitator' Lok. Tilak, was prosecuted, convicted and deported to Mandalay for six years in 1908. During his absence in India the Government pursued the traditional policy of repression but they had to temper it with a morsel of political reform and in 1909 India was offered the Morley-Minto Reforms. The elder Indian statesmen of moderate views accepted these reforms as a step forward towards constitutional progress but the Indian public opinion as such was not satisfied with those reforms. On the other hand these reforms were definitely of a retrograde character for they introduced the principle of separate electorate for the first time in India. The Congress disapproved of these reforms and expressed its dissatisfaction at:—

"(a) the excessive and unfairly preponderant share of representation given to one particular religion;

(b) the unjust, invidious, and humiliating distinctions made between Muslim and non-Mulim subjects of His

Majesty in the matter of the electorates, the franchise, and the qualifications of candidates;

(c) the wide, arbitrary and unreasonable disqualification and restrictions for candidates seeking election to the Councils;

(d) the general distrust of the educated classes that runs through the whole course of the Regulations; and

(e) the unsatisfactory composition of the non-official majorities in the Provincial Councils, rendering them ineffective and unreal for all practical purposes." *

These reforms were obviously intended to create dissensions between the two Indian communities by conferring official favour on the one at the expense of and obvious injustice to the interests of the other. To become a voter under these reforms a Muslim had to pay an Income-tax on Rs. 3000/- a year while a non-Muslim had to pay it on Rs. 300,000 a year. A Muslim graduate was required to have a three years' standing to become a voter, while a non-Muslim was required to have thirty years' standing to become a voter.

The Govermment in pursuance of their policy of 'divide and rule' were playing one community against the other. They helped to start the Congress when they found the necessity of giving vent to the agitated Indian public opinion through legitimate channels to avert the mighty agrarian upsurge that was then an imminent possibility. But when they found that this organisation converted itself into a revolutionary body, they needed the help of some other popular organisation to preserve their rule in India. Therefore,

* (1909 Congress Resolution IV)

with the help of reactionaries and 'Yes-men' such as the Hon. Aga Khan, wielding religious influence over Muslims, they encouraged the formation of a new organisation– The Muslim League (1906). This move disrupted the Indian Nationalist ranks for they could no longer speak with one united voice and every Nationalist demand from then onwards was counterbalanced by the reactionary Muslim League demand. The British could, therefore, pose themselves as the self-appointed arbitrators between the two and perpetuate their rule because of divisions in the nationalist ranks.

In 1914 the Great War broke out in Europe and the very existence of the British Empire was threatened by the expanding German imperialism. England was faced with a difficult situation which she had never any occasion to expect since the days of the Spanish Armada. She required help from every quarter of the British Empire and naturally also from India. Promises of post-war reforms, therefore, were freely and solemnly given to India. The British Government solemnly declared that they went to war for the sake of their plighted word; while in fact they went to war for the preservation of their far-flung Empire. England declared, she went to war to end war as a means of settling international disputes; while within her own Empire she held together unwilling nations by force of arms. The English themselves could not escape noticing this glaring contrast in their word and deed and, therefore, they made free promises that as soon as the war ended and the Empire was out of danger India would be granted self-rule on an equal footing with other Dominions within the Empire. As the later history proved these promises were only meant to induce Indian nationalists to help the Government in the successful prosecution of

war. The Indian statesmen believed in the British professions and rushed to the help of the Empire in danger. Men, material and money freely flowed from India to Britain. A sort of truce was declared between the Government and the Indian nationalists who even closed their ranks by making a pact with the Muslim League (The Lucknow Pact 1916). Indian blood was shed on European battle-fields for the defence of the Empire. The whole of India's economy was placed on war-footing. Indian labour was harnessed to the production of war materials. Indian money was utilised to pay the heavy costs of a prolonged war. The whole population suffered from want of daily necessities for the sake of a war that was waged five thousand miles away from the Indian shores to preserve an Empire whose component part India willingly never was. The war was won and the Empire saved. And history repeated itself. The danger passed and the promises were forgotten. Sham political reforms were offered which were not upto the Indian expectations. Discontent spread in every section of the public opinion and the Indian Muslims were also drawn in the general resentment at the Government's betrayal of the national cause. The British Government's hostile attitude towords Turkey and their general anti-Muslim policy in the Middle East roused anti-British feelings throughout the Muslim world and Indian Muslims shared these feelings of their brethren across the Indian frontiers. The anti-national and the anti-Muslim attitude of the British Government helped to cement the Hindu-Muslim unity already achieved at Lucknow.

The Indian National Congress championed the cause of the Muslim world and launched an unprecedented struggle against the citadel of British Power in India in the form of

Non-co-operation movement which was whole-heartedly supported by Muslims and Hindus alike. A man of destiny, frail in body, noble in spirit, strong of character, visionary, but with keen understanding of an ordinary man's problems, brave, resolute, fearless, undaunted by difficulties, philosopher, preacher and an Apostle of Truth and Non-violence–such a great man, Mahatma Gandhi, came to the rescue of the Indian nation, and since then has always remained at the helm of the Indian political affairs and piloted the Nation safe through storms to the shore of Independence.

Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Indian nationalism waged many a pitched battle against alien rule. At times it was on the offensive; at times on the defensive. At times it was triumphant; at others it lay prostrate and bleeding. But all through this storm and sunshine; all through the days of darkness and despair and all through the period of light and hope the moving spirit behind the onward march of Nationalism was Mahatma Gandhi. The history of this period is filled with glory and martyrdom in the cause of the Nation. From this period onwards the character of the Indian struggle for freedom takes on a distinct mass basis and the new leadership replaces the old liberal, traditionally pro-British one. But before we record the history of this period we have to study another characteristic movement that has left its peculiar impress on India's freedom struggle. That movement concerns the awakening of the Indian Muslims and the formation and growth of their separate organisation leading up to the establishment of a separate Muslim State in India.

CHAPTER. II.

THE AWAKENING OF INDIAN MUSLIMS.

From times immemorial India has been the alluring land for invasions and immigrations for a number of races from Central and Western Asia and from countries farther west. Not much is known about the indigenous inhabitants of India. From excavations at Mahenjo-Daro in Sind and Hapara in the Punjab it can be inferred that about five thousand years ago a civilisation— the Indus-Valley civilisation— had flourished in those parts of India; and the indigenous population of those parts was in a more advanced stage of civilisation than many peoples of contemporary world. Due to some inexplicable reasons, however, that civilisation was wiped out and there appears, for all outward purposes at least, no link between that civilisation and the subsequent Aryan (Hindu) civilisation. The Aryan immigrants from Central Asia established their settlements in the Punjab and later on along the banks of the Ganges into the very heart of India and from then onwards India came to be known as Aryavarta–the land of the Aryas. They developed their own culture and through centuries of development and expansion absorbed in their fold the Dravidians–the earlier inhabitants of the country. Many more races followed the Aryas. Invasions and immigrations followed one another through succeeding centuries. These include a variety of races and peoples–Iranians, Greeks, Huns, early Christians, Jews, Zorostrians, and the Arabs before Arabia was converted to Islam. These came to India and with each immigrant race a conflict followed; but

sooner or later they were all absorbed within the Aryan fold. The early Aryans displayed an amazing capacity for synthesis throughout history almost up to the early centuries of the Christian Era. This fusion of many races and cultures gave the Indian civilisation a sustaining power and while other civilisations flourished and vanished and receded into oblivion, the Indian civilisation still persists, flourishes, and invokes admiration.

In the later centuries of Christian Era India came in contact with yet another civilisation–the Muslims who had the vigour of a new expanding religion and zeal bordering on fanaticism derived from faith in their Islamic mission. And yet Arabia, the homeland of Islam, had peaceful cultural contacts with India and Indian sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine etc. were studied and even improved upon by the Arabs who in the seventh and eighth centuries A. D. were the most inquisitive people amongst their contemporaries and took active interest in intellectual pursuits. Literary works in Latin, Sanskrit and other classical languages were translated into Arabic and foreign influx of intellectuals and scientists was encouraged. Islam, which had its origin in Arabia was not thus altogether intolerant of other systems of thought and science. In the matter of trade and commerce Arabia even before being converted to Islam had trade relations with India and when she changed faith her trade settlements on the Malabar coast in the south were never interfered with by the native Indian rulers. But, nonetheless, contact with Islam in the North was not peaceful as in the South. Because they came not as traders, but with sword in their hand to spread Islam, they were met with sword—perhaps a sword that was rusted through centuries of dis-use. However, the rusted sword had ultimately to yield and Muslim dynasties

were founded in the North. These Muslim dynasties latterly made India their home-land and the Muslims became a part and parcel of the indigenous Indian populace as they had no outside affiliations and looked upon later Muslim invaders as foreigners. Thus, though Northern India passed under Muslim rule, it was never subjected to a 'foreign' rule in the real sense of the word. With the passage of time Muslim kingdoms were founded in the South at places like Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda. The whole Indian peninsula was dotted with Muslim kingdoms, small and great and interspersed in between them were Hindu kingdoms. Chief among them in the South was the Kingdom of Vijayanagar which had flourished under its able ruler, Krishna Deva Raya. There were continuous armed clashes between Hindu and Muslim states and these are represented to-day as clashes between the unaccomodating and unaccomodable socio-religious systems – Hinduism and Mohemadanism. But what is forgotten in this connection is that along with these clashes there were fiercer clashes between different Muslim dynasties themselves. Wave after wave of invasions followed one another and each new invader, Muslim by religion, attempted to oust from power the already stabilized Muslim dynasty. History abounds with such examples. Sultan Ibrahim Lodi was defeated on the battle-field of Panipat (1526) and Babar founded the most powerful Moghul dynasty at Delhi, the ancient capital of India, from where his successors extended their power and influence to the Bay of Bengal in the east, Kambayat in the west and beyond the Vindhyas in the south inspite of the fierce opposition from southern Muslim kingdoms. This fact very clearly illustrates that the internecine warfare of the Middle Ages in India was more of a dynastic than of a religious character. It may even be asserted

without fear of contradiction that the chief motive force behind it was never religious in the sense that the contemporary Crusades in the West were or the persecution of one sect of Christianity by another in the early Christian Era or even in the Middle Ages. Of course it is not contended here that the religious factor was altogether absent. That was impossible in those days when religion played so great a part in man's life. But, barring exceptions, religious tolerance was more evident in India than contemporary Europe. Many high officials in the Moghul Court were Hindus with such luminaries among them as Birbal, Raja Todarmal, Raja Jaising and many others. On the other hand several Muslims were in the employ of Hindu Kings including Shivaji, the founder of Hindu-pad-padshahi (Hindu Empire),and they unhesitatingly fought against their co-religinists on behalf of their Hindu masters. The Muslim intelligentsia showed a very tolerant spirit towards Hinduism and Hindu scriptures and under high Muslim patronage Sanskrit works, such as Upanishads, Bhagwat Gita, Yoga–Vasishta, Ramanayan and Mahabharat were translated into Persian. These works greatly enchanted the Muslim scholars who helped to blend the two cultures and initiated an attempt which ultimately resulted in the formation of Sufism which is very akin to Hindu Vedantic Philosophy. Later on Akbar, the Great Moghul Emperor, himself undertook this great task of effecting a fusion of these two great cultures.

Whatever the success these attempts at fusion of the two cultures attained, it is indisputable that these would have been the beginnings of a process of assimilation and adjustment had they been allowed to run their own natural course. But before the completion of this process of cultural fusion

an altogether different civilization of the West came to India with all its glitter and modernism and brought in its wake railways, telegraphs and a plethora of all scientific inventions of the new Industrial Era and brought all India under its control by playing one Indian community against the other, and one Indian power against another. The British were aware that numerically their position was very weak in India, and though they had the advantage of science, they could not exclusively rely on it for the extension and preservation of their domination in India. India in all its long history was hardly ever brought under one governing centre. When the British came, there were a number of warring powers in India and the British, subtle diplomats as they were, very soon acqired a dominant position and pursued from the very beginning the policy of 'divide and rule.' " Divide et empera was the old Roman motto and it should be ours," said Mount Stuart Elphinstone. Surely and unmistakably they followed it, for otherwise they would have been wiped out by sheer force of numbers arrayed against their growing power.

In the middle of the nineteenth century when the British thought they had sufficiently consolidated their power in India they pursued a bolder policy of annexation of native states and always invented some pretext or other for such annexations during Lord Dulhousie's Viceroyalty. But here they out-did themselves as the Rebellion of 1857 proved to their cost. In this Rebellion the Muslims took a very prominent part whereby they hoped to restore the Muslim sovereignty in Delhi. After the ruthless suppression of this Revolt the Brirish, as a reprisal against the predominent Muslim participation in it, consistently pursued a definite anti-Muslim policy almost till the end of the century. In the Army which was the coveted profession of Indian Muslims their represetation was heavily reduced in favour

of other non-Muslim communities, especially the Sikhs and the Gurkhas. The guiding principle of British Rule in India had always been to patronise one community against the other and to prevent by whatever means the welding together of these communities for a common cause of wresting power from the British. Apart from the policy in regard to the Muslim recruitment to the army the British discouraged the teaching of Persian and Arabic in the Government aided schools and thus the whole educational system became repugnant to them who thereafter remained backward in matters educational and thereby obviously in liberal professions such as Law and Medicine. Their recruitment in civil departments of the administration was also restricted. The Permanent Settlement land system also adversely affected the Muslims in Bengal. In pursuing such and other anti-Muslim policies before and after 1857 the British patronised the Hindu intellegentsia from among whom emerged great social and religious leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Swami Vivekananda, Justice Ranade and many others in different provinces of India. The outlook of all these men of the early British rule in India was not hostile to foreign rule and they believed in the professions of the rulers that their policy in India was to prepare the country gradually for self-rule on Western democratic model. They aroused the slumbering Hindu consciousness and brought about a Hindu Renaissance which was to precede the growth of nationalism in India. But the Hindu Renaissance did not have its Muslim counterpart and a whole community comparatively remained backward in all respects.

Because of their apathy towards the Western system of education the Muslims in India could not produce any such outstanding personalities in the early period of British rule

Nevertheless, the community was not altogether barren of distinguished leaders. One of such notables among the Muslim community was Sir Syed Ahmed, who in 1858, immediatly after the great Rebellion, when feelings had not subsided on both sides, had fearlessly condemned the Government for being unmindful of the public opinion in India; which attitude of the Government according to him, caused the 1857 Revolt. He has played a very great and constructive part in the Muslim educational field. Fearless as he was in his attacks on the Government, he did not spare his co-religionists for observations of outmoded traditions and customs. His outspoken exposition aroused the wrath of orthodox Muslims who went even to the extent of ex-communicating him. Nothing undaunted, he pursued his plan of establishing a Muslim educational institution and founded the Aligarh University. In his early days he was a strong nationalist by faith and had declared, "In the word Nation I include both Hindus and Muhammedans..... I call both these races which inhabit India by one Word, i. e. Hindoos, meaning to say that they are the inhabitants of Hindusthan." But in his later days he came under the influence of European principals of the Aligarh college and this influence narrowed down his broad national views to petty communalism. This unhappy change in him was criticized even by his life-long progressive companions as his influence among the Muslims was used to wean away the Muslim educated classes from the influence of the growing nationalism of the Congress. Nevertheless his narrower views were not accepted by the Muslims as a community and the more advanced among them supported and joined the Congress. Mr. Badra-ud-din Tyabji (President of the Madras Congress Session, 1887), Mr. Ali

Mohammad Bhimji, an influential Bombay merchant, were among the Muslim notables who actively participated in the Congress from its very beginning. The Muslim divines, who usually hold great influence over Muslim masses, had also advised Muslims to support their Hindu compatriots in an attempt to better the lot of the common man of both the communities. Thus, till the beginning of the 20th century no appreciable divisions were perceptible in the nationalist ranks which were joined by Hindus and Muslims alike. When the political situation in the country was worsening due to the increasing hostility of the Government towards nationalist demands and a section of the Indian political leaders was becoming impatient of the delaying British tactics in matters relating to political reforms and was in favour of adopting direct action to bring pressure on the Government then it was that the Government thought of a move which would create disruption among Indians and declared their intention to partition Bengal, outwardly to facilitate the administation of the province, but actually to alienate Muslims against Hindus. In the Eastern division of Bengal Muslims were in a majority and the Government's real intention for the partition was to "foster in Eastern Bengal the growth of Mohamaden power, which, it is hoped, will have the effect of keeping in check the rapidly growing strength of the Hindu community." Thus, it is evident that the partition-missile was aimed at two objects; first to wean away Muslims from nationalist struggle and next to destroy the unity and self-respect of Bengal — the province which was the first to pass under British rule and also the first to rise from its slumbers, shake off its stupor, and defy the foreign rule. But this missile of partition was no ordinary missile. It turned into a 'boomerang' and knocked down its users. 'The announcement of partition

galvanised the whole of India as never before and from thousands of platforms all over the country, scores of leaders, both Hindus and Muslims, protested against the advisability of such a move on the part of Government. Even from among Muslims this move received but a lukewarm support—only the toadies and reactionaries supporting the Govenment. All the unholy motives of the Government were utterly defeated by the mighty upsurge of nationalist feelings and the Government in the end admitted its failure and annulled the Partition in 1911.

But the partition was only one of the several moves in pursuance of the policy of 'divide and rule.' The other move was yet more subtle and went unnoticed at the time and it helped to engender the feelings of hatred and mutual suspicion in the Indian body politic ultimately leading to the vivisection of the country -and the present day fratricide. In 1906, H.H. the Aga Khan was encouragad to lead a deputation of 'representative' Muslims from all parts of India and urge upon the Viceroy in most loyal terms the necessity of seperate Muslim representation in all representative bodies, right from the Local Bodies to the Legislative Councils The success of the deputaion, by contrast, becomes conspicuous, when we observe that " the necessity of separate Muslim representation" was immediately accomodated in the later Morley-Minto Reforms and a novel system of separate electorates was introduced through them, while all the long-standing nationalist demands were being turned down. The British could readily concede the disruptionist demands but never willingly showed any conciliatory gesture to the far more organised and widely supported progressive demands inspite of their constant

boasting of their unifying mission in India — of their Trusteeship Creed — of their having restored peace in the land. What they were in fact doing was to sow seeds of civil war by favouring one or the other of the communities as suited their interests from time to time.

Taking a cue from the success of the Aga Khan Deputation a conference of represntative Muslims was called at Dacca by Nawab Salimullah Khan in 1906. This conference was ultimately turned into a permanent Muslim organisation — the Muslim League (30th December, 1906). The aims and objects of the League were defined as follows:—

(1) To promote among Indian Moslems feelings of loyalty towards the British Government and to remove any misconceptions that may arise, as to the intentions of the Government with regard to any of its measures.

(2) To protect the political and other rights of the Indian Moslems and to place their needs and aspirations before the Government in temperate language.

(3) So far as possible, without prejudice to objects mentioned under (1) and (2), to promote friendly feelings between Moslems and other communities in India.

The seeds of disruption sowed by the Government were tenderly guarded and watered by the disruptionist Muslims and very soon sprouts began to appear overground in the form of opposition to demands not only of the Indian National Congress but also to those of a very large section of Muslim opinion outside the League. Thus, for example, the League disapproved of the attitude of the Congress as also of an influential and large section of Muslim opinion in Bengal, towards the Bengal partition by a resolution at its Amritsar session in 1908. But this pro-Govt. and anti-nati-

onal policy was strongly criticised by prominent Muslims of those days. Maulana Shibli Numani, a Muslim scholar of the time, writes about the reactionary character of the Simla Deputatin in these words:—

> "The object of the Simla Deputation was, and it was frankly expressed, to get a share for the Muslims in the political rights obtained by the Hindus. The League, to keep up appearances, passed some resolutions of national interest, but everyone knows that it is rouge and not the natural bloom. Day and night its constant refrain is that the Muslims are oppressed by Hindus and so they must be given safe-guards. We do not underestimate the importance of the Simla Deputation. It was the biggest show staged on a communal platform. Men from all over the country offered their services when it was a question of waiting in a deputation on the Viceroy — Suppose there was the fear of a frown on the Viceroy's face, few would have come forward to join such a deputation. The fact of the matter is that these men are victims of self-delusion. A tree is judged by the fruit it gives. If our politics had been serious politics, they would have evoked a zest for struggle and a readiness to suffer and sacrifice for an ideal."

What a powerful condemnation of the League politics from a Muslim pen! The League has very shrewdly avoided any struggle even for its disruptionist ideal and has always toed in the line of the Government in opposition to every nationalist cause. On the other hand, whenever there was any question of sharing of the spoils won by the mass-sufferings in campaigns launched by the Congress, the League was always there with demands for its share, over and above its legitimate dues.

However, there was a large section of Nationalist Muslims in India outside the League who unflinchingly supported the Congress in its nationalist demands. The Muslim disruptionist cause also suffered a set-back by the Imperial announcement whereby the partition of Bengal was annulled in 1911 and thus the national aspirations in this respect were satisfied. Soon after came World War I and England needed India's help in men and material to defend the Empire against German militarism. Because of Turkey's entry in the war on the side of Germany against the British, the Indian Muslims were aroused to a man and to them the war took on a new garb of Jehad (religious war). But the traditional League and Congress leaders had such a strong faith in British professions of granting self-Government to India that on the out-break of war, in a joint communication to the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Jinnah, in collaboration with his other colleagues of the Congress deputation, then in London, expressed his strong conviction, that, "the Princes and people of India will readily and willingly co-operate to the best of their ability and afford opportunities by securing that end by placing the resources of their country at His Majesty's disposal." In spite of this readiness to co-operate in the British war effort on the part of their leaders, many Muslims found themselves unable to subscribe to this view; for in the avalanche of war they saw an opportunity to advance the cause of Indian freedom. Some distinguished Muslim leaders like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Saukat Ali and Mohamed Ali, were interned during the period of war as their activities were considered harmful to the British war effort in India.

The Muslim League witnessed a revolutionary change in 1915. The permenant President of the Muslim League, H.H.the

Aga Khan, resigned as a result of prospective Congress-League Alliance. That year the League session in Lucknow was attended by prominent leaders of the Congress, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya etc. So Long the League was under direct domination of high English officials but the nationalist element in the League finally ousted their influence. This session appointed a Committee to draft a scheme of reforms for India and the Committee was directed to work in consultation with the Congress. This Committee succeeded in arriving at an agreement with the Congress on constitutional issues. This is known as the Lucknow Pect (1915) in which an attempt was made to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem and to put forth a joint demand for political reforms. The preamble of this Pact stated "that in the reconstruction of the Empire India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions." The Lucknow Pact conceded increased weightage with separate electorates to Muslims where they were in a minority. The following table shows the percentage of elected Muslim members province-wise:—

(1) Punjab	50 p. c.	of elected Indian Members
(2) United Provinces	30 p. c.	,,
(3) Bengal	40 p. c.	,,
(4) Bihar and Orissa	25 p. c.	,,
(5) Central Provinces	15 p. c.	,,
(6) Madras	15 p. c.	,,
(7) Bombay (with Sind)	33 1/3 p. c.	,,

In accepting the principle of separate electorates it was expected that the bonds of Hindu-Muslim unity would be strengthened. Even Muslim leaders such as, Mr. Jinnah,

were not averse to the idea of such a unity. For he says,

> "But while that demand--demand for freedom-is just one and the sentiment only natural and requires all encouragement, we must not forget that one essential requisite condition to achieve Swaraj is the political unity between Hindus and Muslims, for the advent of foreign rule and its continuance in India is primarily due to the fact that the people of India, particularly the Hindus and Muslims are not united, and do not sufficiently trust each other. The domination by the bureaucracy will continue so long as the Hindus and Muslims do not come to a settlement. I am almost inclined to say that India will get dominion responsible Govt. the day the Hindus and Muslims are united. Swaraj is almost an interchangeable term with Hindu-Muslim unity." *

Supporting and expounding the principle of separate electorate Mr. Jinnah declared in his presidential address of the Bombay Provincial Conference in October 1916,

> "I believe all thinking men are thoroughly convinced that the keynote of our real progresss lies in the good-will, concord, harmony and co-operation between the two great sister communities. The true focus of progress is centred in their union, and remember this is a matter which is entirely in our hand. It requires a true spirit of conciliation and give-and-take. The Muslims want proper, adequate and effective representation in the Council Chambers of the Country and in the District and Municipal Boards, a claim which no right-minded Hindu disputes for a moment. But the Muslims further require that represention in the various

* (Mr Jinnah at the Lahore Session of the All India Muslim League on May 21, 1920)

Boards and Council Chambers should be secured to them by means of separate electorates. The question of separate electorates from top to bottom has been before the country ever since 1909 and rightly or wrongly the Muslim community is absolutely determined for the present to insist upon separate electorates. To most of us the question is no more open to further discussion or argument as it has become a mandate of the community. As far as I understand the demand for separate electorates is not a matter of policy but a matter of necessity to the Muslims, who require to be roused from the coma and torpor into which they have fallen so long. I would, therefore, appeal to my Hindu brethren that in the present state of position they should try to win the confidence and trust of the Muslims who are after all in a minority in the counrry.If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demands."

And after expounding the cause of separate electorates he further appealed to the two communities to maintain 'brotherly feelings.' He continued,

"We want no favours and crave for no partial treatment. That is demoralising to the community and injurious to the State. The Mussalmans must learn to have self respect. What we want is a healthy and fair impetus to be given to our aspirations as a community and it is the most sacred duty of the Government to respond to that claim. Towards the Hindus our attitude should be of good will and brotherly feelings. Co-operation in the cause of our Motherland should be our guiding principle. India's real progress can only be achieved by true understanding and harmonious relations

between the the two great sister communities. With regard to our own affairs we can depend upon nobody but ourselves."

In dispelling the Muslim fears of Hindu majority rule he said :

" Do you think that because the Hindus are in a majority therefore they would carry on a measure in the Legislative Assembly and there is an end of it ? If seventy millions of Muslims do not approve of a measure which is carried by a ballot-box, do you think that it could be enforced by and administered in this country ? Do you think that the Hindu statesmen, with their intellect, with their past history, would ever think of when they get self-Government enforcing a measure by ballot-box ? Then what is there to fear ? Therefore, I say to Muslim freinds not to fear. This is a bogey, which is put before you by your enemies to frighten you, to scare you away from the co-operation with the Hindus, which is essential for the establishment of self-Government. If this country is not to be governed by the Hindus, let me tell you in same spirit, it is not to be governed by the Muslims either and certainly not by the English. It is to be governed by the people and the sons of this country and I- standing here I believe I am voicing the feelings of the whole of India — say that what we demand is the immediate transfer of substantial power of Government of this country and that is the principle demand of our scheme of reforms."

These utterances from the lips of so eminent a personality as Mr. Jinnah go to show how much the bonds of unity were strengthened between the two communities. The time was opportune for further strengthening of these bonds

as the later history shows. In 1917, the Muslim League elected, as its president, the interned Maulana Mohamed Ali. By this act it defied the :British Govt. by expressing its confidence in one whose freedom they dared deprive.

The World War I came to an end in 1918. But there was no prospect of the Indian hopes being fulfilled. On the other hand the Govt. hastened to pass many repressive measures such as the Rowlatt Act (1919,-Criminal Law Amendment Bill and Criminal Emergency Powers Bill). The nationalist India took up the challenge under Gandhiji's inspiring leadership and the Muslim India also responded to Gandhiji's call. Mr. Jinnah resigned his membership of the Imperial Legislative Council. His letter of resignation is of historic importance and reflects the nationalist tendencies of the Muslim India of that period.

Mr. Jinnah's Letter of Resignation.

" Mount Pleasant Road,

Malabar Hill,
28 th March, 1919.

" Your Excellency,

The passing of the Rowllatt Bill by the Government of India and the assent given to it by your Excellency as Governor-General against the will of the people, has severely shaken the trust reposed by them in British justice. Further it has clearly demonstrated the costitution of the Imperial Legislative which is a legislature but in name, a machine propelled by a foreign executive. Neither the unanimous opinion of the non-official Indian members nor the entire public opinion and feelings outside has met with the least respect.

"The Government of India and your Excellency, however, have thought fit to place on the Statute Book a measure admittedly obnoxious and decidedly coercive at a time of peace thereby substituting the executive for the judicial.

"Besides, by passing this Bill your Excellency's Government have actively negatived every argument they advanced but a year ago when they appealed to India for help at the War Conference and have ruthlessly trampled upon the principles for which Great Britain avowedly fought the war.

'The fundamental principles of justice have been uprooted and the constitutional rights of the people have been violated at a time when there is no real danger to the State by an over-fretful and incompetent bureaucracy which is neither responsible to the people nor in touch with real public opinion and their sole plea is that the powers when they are assumed will not be abused.

"I, therefore, as a protest against the passing of the Bill and the manner in which it was passed, tender my resignation, as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council; for I feel that under the prevailing conditions I can be of no use to my people in the Council nor consistently with one's self-respect is co-operation possible with a Government that shows utter disregard for the opinion of the representatives of the people in the Council Chamber, and for the feelings and sentiments of the people outside.

"In my opinion, a Government that passes or sanctions such a law in times of peace forefeits its claim to be called a civilised Government and I still hope that the Secretary of State for India, Mr Montague, will advise His Majesty to signify his disallowance to this Black Act.

Yours truly - M. A. Jinnah."

Besides the Rowlatt Bills the Government provided an additional grievance for discontent among the Indian Muslims. Till the end of the war Turkey was a theocratic State of Calipha who wielded theocratic as well as politcial power over all the Ottoman Empire. Defeat of Turkey led to the bifurcation of these powers by the victorious Allies and it was feared that the very institution of Caliphate was threatened with dissolution–a threat which aroused the fears of Muslims all over the world and this fear was shared by Indian Muslims also. The nationalist India made a common cause with the Muslim India and under one common leader, Mahatma Gandhi, both started a mighty movement known as the Non-Co-operation and the Khilafat Movement. The aim of the Khilafat movement was to effect a change in the anti-Turkish policy of the British Government and secure the following demands:—

(1) The evacuation of Constantinople by the British forces

(2) Suzerainty of Sultan over Holy Places.

(3) The restoration of Ottoman Thrace (including Adrionople) and Smyrna.

During these critical days the Muslim priesthood of India, the Ulema, thought it opportune to enter the Indian politics and under the leadership of Maulana Mohammad-ul-Hasan they founded the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and in its name issued a Fatwa (religious injunction), enjoining upon Muslims to non-co-operate with the Government, to boycott elections to the Councils under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, educational institutions and law Courts and to renounce all titles conferred on them by the British Government.

Thus, the influential, Muslim bodies gave their unflinching support to the political movement of Non-co-operation started by the Congress and the Congress in its turn adopted the Khilafat Movement as its own. This unity of two mighty popular movements shook the very foundations of the British imperialism in India. The people defied the Government ban on processions, meetings etc. and courted imprisonment. Thousands were imprisoned including a large number of Muslims. Hindu and Muslim speakers addressed from the same platform. Public scenes of fraternization between these two great communities of India were numerous and it was thought that through common sufferings underwent for a common ideal differences between them would come to an end once for all and Hindu-Muslim unity would be achieved for ever.

But this was not to be. Under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership the Congress had changed its creed in 1920 and Swaraj to be achieved by peaceful and legitimate means became its objective. This change led to the resignation of Mr. Jinnah from the Congress and later on the All India Muslim League adopted the following resolution explaining its creed and objective:—

(1) Full Dominion Status as a member of the British Commonwealth;

(2) with an adequate representation for the minority in every province without reducing the majority to a minority or even equality;

(3) with a separate electorate;

(4) with no territorial re-distribution;

(5) with safeguards for non-intervention in matters religious;

(6) with the provision that no bill would be passed unless 3/4 of the members of the community are in favour of it.

This divergence of the League from the Congress creed accentuated the disunity that was again creeping up in the Indian politics. The chief cause for the unity no longer existed. In Turkey, Kemal Pasha broke through the thick medieval shell of theocratic influence on state and abolished Khilafat. This took away the very basis of struggle of Indian Muslims whose chief objective was preservation of Khilafat. Politically also the struggle came to an end after the Bardoli decision of the Congress to end the Non-Co-operation movement. The struggle which brought these two communities together came to an end; demoralisation set in and the Muslim League as we have already seen above, drifted away from the main current of nationalism as represented by the Congress. Thus, a period of Hindu-Muslim unity, beginning with the Lucknow Pact of 1916 came to an end and India witnessed a shameful orgy of communal riots in the succeeding years all over India. The murder of Swami Shradhanand by a Muslim fanatic shook the whole country and alienated, inspite of Gandhiji, Hindus against Muslims and the gap between the two communities began to widen. There was no common objective and no common struggle which could unite these communities. Devoid of struggle the League also had no following among the Muslim masses and its annual sessions were very thinly attended. Amidst these depressing conditions appointment of the Simon Commission was annouced in 1927. This Commission was all British-manned and not a single Indian member was taken on its personnel. This enraged all the Indian politcal parties and all of them joined hands in the boycott of the

Commission. But a certain reactionary group in the League wanted to co-operate with it The nationalist element in the organisation, however, was strong enough to prevent this and so the reactionaries including Malik Feroz Khan Noon, Sir Mohammad Shafi, Sir Mohammed Iqbal etc., organised a separate session of the League and passed a resolution moved by Sir Zafrulla Khan, welcoming the appointment of the Simon Commission. Thus a discordant note was struck in the Indian politics for the first time since 1916. This resolution, however did not carry any weight with Muslims in general and the Calcutta Session under the presidentship of Mr. M. A. Jinnah passed a resolution boycotting the Simon Commission. Attempts were also made by various Indian leaders to achieve unity between Hindus and Muslims and to draft by mutual consent, a constitution for future India. Mr. M. A. Jinnah also consented to accept joint eletorates if certain conditions were fulfilled. He declared:

> "Muslims should accept a settlement on the basis of the following proposal so far as the representation in the various Legislatures in any future scheme of constitution is concerned:
>
> (1) Sind should be separated from Bombay and constituted in a separate Province.
>
> (2) Reforms should be intrudoced in the N.W.F. Province and in Baluchistan on the same footing as any other Province. In that case, Muslims are prepared to accept a joint electorate in all Provinces so constituted, and are further willing to make to Hindu minorities in Sind, Baluchistan and the N.W. Frontier the same concessions that Hindu majorities in other Provinces are prepared to make to Muslim minorities."

(3) In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation should be in accordance with the population. In the Central Legislature, Muslim representation shall not be less than a third, and that also by a mixed electorate."

In explaining his demands, Mr. Jinnah, issued the following statement which throws light on his conciliatory frame of mind at that time:—

"The Muslim leaders' offer to Hindus is not, perhaps, appeciated both by Hindus and Mussalmans. This appears to be so because of certain communications that I have received and the interpretation put upon it in certain sections of the Press and the opinions expressed. I, therefore, wish to make it clear that the offer to accept a settlement on the basis of the proposals made therein is subject to what I would call conditions precedent before Mussalmans would be prepared to accept joint electorates with reservation of seats.

These conditions are sine qua non;

(1) That Sind should be separated from Bombay Presidency and constituted into a separate Province;

(2) That reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as any other Province in India and Hindus should agree to support this demand of the Msusalmans.

"It is in the event of these conditions being accepted that the Mussalmans would agree to joint electorates with a reservation of seats in all the Provinces and make the same concessions to the Hindu minorities in the matter of number of representation in

three provinces of Sind, N.W.F. Province, and Baluchistan, as the Hindu majority provinces would be prepared to make to Mussalman minorites. This matter of concessions can be discussed and settled by the reponsible committees that may be appointed by the two communities respectively.

"In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation should be in accordance with population. In the Central Legislature Muslim representation should not be less than one third, also through mixed electorates with reservation of seats. This offer is independent and can only be accepted or rejected in its entirety. The Hindu leaders have in their meeting, held in Delhi on 23rd March, 1927 appointed a committee consisting of representatives of all provinces to frame definite proposals after consulting Hindu opinion and make an early report. I, therefore, trust that the country will give the fullest consideration to the offer without any heat or passion being created and in a calm and impartial atmosphere.

"I may point out that in this offer which is far reaching, the most notable feature is its recognition that separate electorates can only be got rid of by a thorough adpotion of the system of give and take. I trust that it will be criticised in a spirit of toleration. The question of separate electorates or mixed electorates is after all a method and a means to an end. The end in view is that Mussalmans should be made to feel that they are secure and safeguarded against any act of oppression on the part of the majority and that they need not fear

that during the transitional stage towards the development of a national Govt. the majority would be in a position to oppress or tyrannise over the minority as majorities are prone to do in other countries. It must be recognised that under the circumstances and under prevailing conditions it is essential that the political equipoise must be maintained. It is to maintain this balance that the Mussalmans have taken a simpler and more just method with the reciprocity clause. If this main proposition were accepted by the Hindus then a settlement is within reach.

"I am personally not wedded to separate electorates, although I must say that the overwhelming majority of Mussalmans firmly and honestly belive that it is the only method by which they can be secure. I think there are advantages and disadvantages in a system of separate electorates. Yet I am not prepared to subscribe to the view that separate electorates will constitute an effective bar to the growth and development of a representative Government On the other hand, I cannot say that the acceptance of the system of mixed electorates is free from objections under the prevailing conditions or that it will create complete nationalism the next day. The question, therefore, of a system of separate or mixed electorates is, as I said before, more a question of method and means to an end. Therefore, the real issue is how to give a real sense of confidence and security to the minorities.

"The other questions, viz. the fomulas regarding the share of Mussalmans in the services of the

country, safeguards in the Legislatures against Bills and resolutions which may affect religion, custom, usage of inter-communal interest and the question regarding other elected bodies can, I think, be solved if the major proposals contained in the offer could be agreed upon.

"..... I may in conclusion say that no time should be lost in bringing about a speedy settlement at this critical juncture."

The Hindu response to the above conditions and statement was not satisfactory in the opinion of Muslim leaders. The Calcutta session under Mr. Jinnah's presidentship however decided to appoint a committee to work in co-operation with the Congress and other political organisations to produce a draft scheme of India's political reforms. In the meanwhile a Muslim All Party's Conference was convened in which the Muslim League participated. The Nehru-Report was discussed in the Conference, but it was rejected though the nationalist Muslims wanted to adopt it with certain modifications. Subsequently they left the League and formed a new Nationalist Muslim Party which always supported the Indian Congress. In 1931 they met at Lucknow from all over India. The President, Sir Ali Imam, strongly condemned the separatist tendency of Muslims and advocated joint electorates. He admitted that he once belonged to that school of thought which championed the cause of separate elctorates. In 1906 he himself was a member of the Deputation which waited on Lord Minto. But later he had revised his views and come to the conclusion that separate electorate "was not only the negation of Indian nationalism but also positively harmful to the Muslims

themselves." He further declared that the Conference represented the entire Muslim intelligentsia. The Conference passed some important resolutions, chief among them was one demanding the declaration of the fundamental rights in the constitution. By one of its resolutions, the Conference also recommended the settlement of all questions in dispute on the basis of universal and adult franchise, joint electorates and reservation of seats in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on population basis for minorities of less than 30 % with right to contest additional seats. These resolutions passed at a critical time when the political atmosphere in the country was highly surcharged, amply proved that the Muslims were in no mood of obstructionism. These nationalist Muslims had also participated in the Civil Disobedience movement during 1930—1934. All this adversely affected the Muslim League politics. Before the Congress started the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Muslim League had adopted the following fourteen points to bring about an alliance between the chief political parties in India. Its Resolution stated:—

> "The League, after anxious and careful consideration most earnestly and emphatically lays down that no scheme for the future constitution of the Government of India will be acceptable to Mussalmans of India until and unless the following basic principles are given effect to and provisions embodied therein to safeguard their rights and interests:—
> (1) The form of the future constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the provinces.
> (2) A uniform measure of autonomy shall be granted to all Provinces.

(3) All Legislatures in the country and other elected bodies shall be constituted on the definite principle of adequate and effective representation of minorites in every province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even equality.
(4) In the Central Legislature, Mussalman representation shall not be less than one-third.

(5) Representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present provided it shall be open to any community at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate.

(6) Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and N. W. F. Province.

(7) Full religious liberty, i. e., liberty of belief, worship and observance, propoganda, association and education shall be guaranteed to all communities.
(8) No bill or resolution or any part thereof shall be passed in any lagislature or any other elected body if three fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose such a bill, resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative, such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases.

(9) Sind should be separated from Bombay Presidency.

(10) Reforms should be introduced in the N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces.

(11) Provision should be made in the constitution giving Muslims an adequate share along with the other Indians in all the services of the State and in local self-governing bodies having due regard to the requirements of efficiency.

(12) The constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal laws and Muslim charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants-in aid given by the State and by the Self governing bodies.

(13) No cabinet, either Central or Provincial should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim Ministers.

(14) No change shall be made in the constitution by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the States constituting the Indian Federation."

In the light of this resolution embodying Mr. Jinnah's fourteen points it is worthwhile to study the Congress reaction and its position vis-a-vis the worsening communal situation in India. The Nehru Report was rejected by the Muslim League. The Sikhs and other minorities also very strongly criticized it. So the Congress did not come forward to take initiative in the solution of communal problem. The Congress position was that since the problem could not be settled on the lines recommended in the Nehru Report it was prepared to give its assent to any solution agreed upon

by all the parties concerned. In this connexion the Working Committee of the Congress issued the following statement:-

"However much it may have failed in the realization the Congress has, from its very inception, set up pure nationalism as its ideal. It has endeavoured to break down communal barriers. The following Lahore Resolution was the culminating point in its advance towards nationalism:

'In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report, it is necessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal question, the Congress believing that in an independent India communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines. But as the Sikhs in particular, and the Muslims and other minorities in general, had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of the communal questions proposed in the Nehru Report, this Congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.'

"Hence the Congress is precluded from setting forth any communal solution of the problem. But at this critical juncture in the history of the Nation, it is felt that the Working Committee should suggest for adoption by the country a solution, though communal in appearance, yet as nearly national as possible and generally acceptable to the communities concerned. The Working Committee has, therefore, after full and free discussion, passed the following scheme:—

1. (a) The article in the constitution relating to Fundamental Rights shall include a guarantee to communities concerned of their cultures, languages, scripts, education, profession and practice of religion, and religious endowments.

(b) Personal laws shall be protected by specific provisions to be embodied in the constitution.

(c) Protection of political and other rights of minority communities in the various Provinces shall be the concern and be within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government.

2. The franchise shall be extended to all adult men and women.

Note:— The Working Committee is committed to adult franchise by the Karachi Resolution of the Congress and cannot entertain any alternative franchise. In view, however, of misapprehensions in some quarters, the Committee wishes to make it clear that in any event the franchise shall be uniform and so extensive as to reflect in the electoral roll the proportion in the population of every community.

3. (a) Joint electorates shall form the basis of representation in the future constitution of India.

(b) For the Hindus in Sind, the Muslims in Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab and the N. W. F. Province, and for Hindus and Muslims in any province where they are less than twentyfive percent of the population, seats shall be reserved in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on the basis of population with the right to contest additional seats.

'4. Appointment shall be made by non-party Public Service Commissions which shall prescribe the minimum qualifications, and which shall have due regard to efficiency of the Public Service as well as to the principle of equal opportunity to all communities for a fair share in the Public Services of the country.

'5. In the formation of Federal and Provincial Cabinets, the interest of minority communities should be recognized by convention

'6. The N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan shall have the same form of Government and administration as other Provinces

'7. Sind shall be constituted into a separate Province, provided that people of Sind are prepared to bear the financial burden of the separated Province.

'8. The future constitution of the country shall be federal. The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units unless, on further examination, it is found to be against the best interests of India.'

"The Working Committee has adopted the foregoing scheme as a compromise between the proposals based on undiluted communalism and undiluted nationalism. Whilst on the one hand the Working Committee hopes that the whole Nation will endorse the scheme, on the other hand it assures those who take extreme views and cannot adopt it that the Committee will gladly, as it is bound to, by the Lahore Resolution, accept without reservation any other scheme if it commends the acceptance of all the parties concerned."

By this statement the Congress virtually conceded the League demands embodied in its resolution [points, 9, 10, 11 & 12] But point No. 5 regarding separate electorates proved the bone of contention and Congress League unity remained as distant as ever.

Throughout this period the Muslim League became a body of reactionaries and rank communalists. It had no influence even among the Muslims. But events soon began to happen which gave the Muslim League its long awaited opportunity of extending its influence on the Muslim community. The Civil Disobedience Movement had been suspended and Mr. Ramsey Macdonald gave his own award on the communal problem and the League Council at its Delhi meeting in 1934 accepted this award. But even while accepting this award Mr. Jinnah declared that co-operation between two communities would be soon an accomplished fact. He said:—

"India looks forward to a real, solid, united front. It is upto the leaders to put their heads together and nothing will give me better happiness than bring about complete co-operation and friendship between Hindus and Muslims and in this desire my impression is that I have the solid support of Mussalmans."

In 1936 another president of the League, Sir Syed Wazir Hasan, stressed the importance of communal unity In his presidential address at the Bombay session of the League he fervently declared,

"In the higher interest of the country I appeal for unity not only among Hindus and Muslims as such but between various classes and different political organisations. Such a unity will not only make an ideal a reality but it will also

give opportunity of political adjustment amongst all concerned. Even in the past there was no difference on essentials and there is none now. The difficulties in detail have ceased to exist. Is there any moral justification left for perpetuating differences, when the supreme need of the country in its struggle for freedom is unity?"

Thus it is clear that even when the Communal Award was accepted, the Muslim League leaders were thinking in terms of Communal amity for the common objective of political freedom. Till 1936, the League preached unity and 'a real solid united front' for achieving India's freedom. It also opposed the 1935 Constitution and the federal scheme contained in it. Mr. Jinnah had moved the following amendment in the Central Legislative Assembly when it discussed the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report. The amendment read:—

> "1. That this Assembly accepts the Communal Award, so far as it goes, until a substitute is agreed upon by the various communities concerned.
>
> 2. As regards the scheme of Provincial Governments, this House is of opinion that it is most unsatisfactory and disappointing in as much as it includes the various objectionable features, particularly the establishment of Second Chamber, the Extra-ordinary and Special Powers of the Governors, provisions relating to Police Rules, Secret Service and Intelligence Departments, which render the real control and responsibility of the Executive and Legislature ineffective, and therefore, unless these objectionable features are removed, it will not satisfy any section of Indian opinion.

3. With respect to the scheme of the Central Govt., called 'All-India Federation' this House is clearly of opinion that it is fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable to the people of British India, and therefore, recommends to the Govt. of India to advise His Majesty's Govt. not to proceed with any legislation based on this scheme and urges that immediate efforts should be made to consider how best to establish in British India alone a real and complete Responsible Govt., and with that view, take steps to review the whole position, in consultation with Indian opinion without delay."

This amendment was passed by the Central Assembly, the Congress voting for it.

The British Government, however, inspite of opposition from all quarters, imposed the 1935 constitution (The Govt. of India Act. 1935) on India and in 1937 elections under this constitution were announced. The Congress contested the elections with a view to wreck the constitution and it secured an amazing success at the polls. The League also contested the elections but made a very poor show. The following table gives election results of 1937:—

Province	Muslim League	Other Muslims
Madras	11	17
Bombay	20	9
Bengal	40	77
United Provinces	27	37
Punjab	1	83
Bihar	Nil	39
Central Provinces	Nil	14

Province	Muslim League	Other Muslims
Assam	9	25
N. W. F. Province	Nil	36
Orissa	Nil	4
Sind	Nil	36
Total.....	108	377

The League failed to secure even a third of the Muslim seats in all India. There was not a single province where it secured a majority of Muslim seats and even in Muslim majority provinces the League could not be in a majority to form provincial Ministries of its own. This was due to the fact that in Muslim majority provinces things were not favourable for the League. In Bengal, under the leadership of Mr. Fazlul Huq, the Kroshak Proja Party was dominant. In the Punjab, under the leadership of the veteran Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Unionist Party routed the Muslim League at polls. In the N. W. F. Province the Congress under the able guidance of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, the 'Frontier Gandhi' and his brother Dr. Khan defeated the League.

The League, however, would not accept these defeats. It was clear as daylight that on an all-India basis the only political party having any mass influence was the Congress and that the League had no mass backing even among the Muslim community. On the declaration of election results and after some initial controversy which ended in the Congress gaining its point, the Congress formed Ministries in the six Provinces in which it was in majority. Attempts made by the League to secure seats on the Provincial cabinets in the Congress Provinces entirely failed as the League was in no mood to give

its assent to the Congress Manifesto. The League failure to have composite Cabinets in Congress Provinces enstranged it to the Congress and the estrangement brought about a change in its political creed and tactics and the preachers of 'United Front' poured forth all their venom and fury on the Congress. Gradually a new policy began to shape itself. At the Lucknow session of the League in 1937 the Rajah of Mohamudabad complained that the majority community (meaning thereby the Congress), "refuses to work in co-operation with our leaders for national advancement." He wanted the Congress to work in co-operation (i.e. form Coalition Ministries) with leaders of a defeated Party who could not secure even a third of Muslim seats. Mr. Jinnah also declared that "Since they (the Congress) have formed Government in six provinces where they are in majority, they have by their words, deeds, and programme shown that the Mussalmans cannot expect any fair play or justice at their hands. On the very threshold of what little power and responsibility is given, the majority community have already shown their hand that Hindustan is for Hindus."

Later on, the League began to compain of Congress tyranny and atrocities perpetrated against the minorities in Congress Provinces But none of the responsible League leaders ever cared to prove these 'atrocites' even after repeated challanges from the high-ranking Congress leaders. It was enough for the League purpose that it could use this atrocity charge against the Congress to popularize itself among Muslim masses. It wanted to discredit the Congress and rouse the religious fanaticism of Muslims to bring them under the League banner. It, therefore, began to describe the Congress as a Hindu body from which Muslims could not

expect any justice. And, therefore, in the name of Islam its appeal to the Indian Muslims was to form an anti-Hindu front in India. In this highly surcharged atmosphere, the Working Committee of the Muslim League met at Meerut (March, 1939) where various schemes for India's future constitutional reforms were put forward with a view to promote the well-being and interests of Indian Muslims. The Working Committee appointed a special committee to examine these schemes, and ultimately favoured the one envisaging the establishment of a separate Muslim State in India on the assumption of the newly discovered theory that Hindus and Muslims form two separate Nations. So long, the Muslim League had accepted the position of a minority community for Indian Muslims and all its efforts were directed to secure constitutional safeguards for the community. All previous dicussions with other parties were conducted on that plane but invariably the minority problem in India always evaded solution.

Defeat at the polls in provincial elections in 1937 was an eye-opener to the League and failure in attempts at power sharing in Congress provinces further estranged its politics from the main current of nationalism. The League once for all abandoned the position of the Muslims as a minority community and asserted that the Muslims form a separate 'Nation' in India.

In September, 1939 England declared war on Germany and the Viceroy declared India a belligerent country without consulting the Central Legislative Assembly or leaders of India's chief political parties. From this date onwards a crisis ensued which, day by day, deepened and worsened India's

political atmosphere. The history of this period is one of growing conflict between Indian nationalism and the decaying British Imperialism—the one trying to assert itself and shape India's destiny according to the freely expressed will of the Indian people while the other trying to preserve and perpetuate its parasitic hold on India by promoting and taking advantage of India's internal dissensions. The Muslim League throughout this period of grim struggle maintained an attitude of sitting on the fence without caring to come to the rescue of bleeding but nevertheless defying nationalism. In 1940, the Muslim League at its Lahore Session passed the famous Pakistan resolution which inter-alia states :—

> "Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principles, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

Thus, from 1940 onwards the League made the establishment of a separate, sovereign and independent Muslim State in India its creed and with the slogan of Pakistan grew in strength from year to year and rallied the Indian Muslims round its banner.

CHAPTER III
INDIA UNDER GANDHIJI'S LEADERSHIP.
(1919-1939)



" Who would be free themselves must strike the blow. "
— *Byron.*

The years from 1919 to 1939 are crowned with events of far reaching character and form stepping stones which ultimately led India to the Shrine of Independence.

In 1919, protest against the Rowlatt Bills was raised from all quarters in India. All the important political parties were one in condemning the Bills as the Black Act. When India needed a conciliatory gesture from the British Government she was offered this Black Act. She had sent her sons to various battle-fields in all quarters of the world in the hour of the Empire's need in order that by the spilling of their young innocent blood for the freedom of other small outraged nations of the world her own freedom might be secured. It was the faith of the Indian leadership of the time that by offering ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire in its moment of danger India would attain her goal of self-Government. Gandhiji wrote.:—

" I recognise that in the hour of its (Empire's) danger we must give as we have decided to give ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire of which we aspire in the near future to be partners in the same sense as the Dominions Overseas. But it is a simple truth that our response is due to the expectations that our goal will be reached all the more speedily. On that account, even as

performance of duty automatically confers a corresponding right, people are entitled to believe that the imminent reforms will embody the main general principles of the Congress-League scheme and I am sure it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference * to tender to the Government their full-hearted co-operation.

"I am sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule to be realised in the shortest possible time will satisfy the Indian people. I know that there are many in India who consider no sacrifice is too great in order to achieve the aim and they are wakeful enough to realise that they must be equally prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Empire in which they hope and desire to reach their final status. It follows then that we can accelerate our journey to the goal by silently and simply devoting ourselves heart and soul to the work of delivering the Empire from threatening danger. It will be a national suicide not to recognise this elementary truth. We must perceive that if we serve to save the Empire we have in that very act secured the Home Rule."

The great national leaders led the Congress following and through them the teeming Indian millions to believe that on the conclusion of hostilities Indian aspirations for Home Rule would be fulfilled and her right to self-determination would be recognised not only as a reward for her invaluable aid to the Empire but as her natural inherent right as that of any other nation, small or big, on the face of this earth Mrs. Annie Besant said in 1914 :

> ".....There had been talk of a reward due to India's loyalty ; but India does not chaffer with the blood of her sons

* Delhi War Conference 1918.

> and the proud tears of her daughters in exchange for so much liberty, so much right. India claims the right, as a Nation, to justice among the peoples of the Empire. India asked for this before the War. India asks for it during the War. India will ask for it after the War; but not as reward, but as right does she ask for it. On that there must be no mistake."

But Great Britain neither recognised this indisputable right nor offered India what was her due as a reward for her war services. Instead, repressive measures were adopted to put down all sort of nationalist activities. Rowlatt Bills was one such measure which aroused country-wide protest.

Rowlatt Bills :

They were two in numbers and were framed "to enable anarchical offeces to be tried expiditiously by strong Court of three High Court Judges with no right to appeal, in areas where offences of a revolutionary type were prevalent It also provided for powers to order persons suspected to be concerned in movements likely to lead to the commission of offences against the State, to funish security, to reside in a particular area, or to abstain from any specified act. And as a safeguard, an investigating authority composed of one Judge and one non-official was to examine the material upon which orders against any persons were framed. Thirdly, Local Governments were given powers to arrest persons reasonably believed to be connected with certain offences, the commission of which threatened public safety, and to confine them in such places and under such conditions as were prescribed. Further, dangerous characters already under control or in confinement could be continuously detained under the Bill. The second Bill was meant to cause a permanent change in

the ordinary Criminal Law of the land. The possession of the seditious document with the intention to publish or to circulate it was to be made punishable with imprisonment."

During the war period and later in the decade many of the elder statesmen of the country had passed away-such as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, G. K. Gokhale, and later Lok. Tilak. A void was created into which stepped Mahatma Gandhi. At that time he was almost a tyro in Indian politics; but he had behind him his South African reputation where, by his unique method of passive resistance, he had restored the honour of the Indian community in that land. There was also about him the glory of the successful Champaran Satyagraha. So as a consequence of the peculiar position of the Indian politics and his unique political methods he very soon assumed the leadership of the nationalist India. He had reason to believe that if India would adopt his technique of passive resistance she could attain her goal. He decided to give expression to the general discontent aroused by the Rowlatt Bills by organising the movement of Satayagraha which was strictly to be conducted non-violently. He, therefore, required the satyagrahies to take the following pledge:—

"Being conscientiously of the opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. 1 of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency powers) Bill No. II of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of an individual on which the safety of India as whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these Bills becoming Law and until they are with-

drawn we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as the Committee, hereafter to be appointed, may think fit, and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property."

Under Gandhiji's leadership, the country was preparing to embark upon a new path of struggle, abandoning the old constitutional methods of which the Indian nationalists had now become impatient. It was prepared to meet the challenge of the mighty Empire which had for about last two hundred years cast its black shadow on this ancient land and interrupted its onward march towards progress and universal brotherhood. In this acceptance of the British challenge India recovered her self-respect—the most valued treasure of any nation as that of an individual. Under stress of events, all parties and persons of divergent views united in this single act of protest against the repressive methods of the Government as symbolised by the Rowllat Bills. Mr. Jinnah also resigned his seat on the Imperial Legislative Council as a mark of protest aginst the Bills. This resignation of Mr. Jinnah revealed the unanimity of Indian public opinion and sentiment. Fuel in the form of Muslim discontent was added to this already enkindled fire and the whole Indian political atmosphere was set ablaze.

Khilafat Movement :

During the Great War Turkey, a Muslim nation, was an ally of Germany and as such an avowed enemy of Great Britain. The Sultan of Turkey, as head of the Muslim religion wielded a great influence over the entire Muslim world and, as the head of temporal power, over the Ottoman Empire,

including Asia Minor and Thrace. When Great Britain found such a mighty Muslim State in the enemy camp she had to find some device to keep the Muslims residing in the Empire loyal to the Imperial Throne and offer her help. So the traditional policy of making free promises was adopted without hesitation and without ever meaning to fulfil them as the later events conclusively proved. The Muslims of India were assured that the British had no territorial ambition in respect of the Turkish Empire. Mr. Lloyd George, among other things, declared, "Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor snd Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race." But this solemn pledge from so high an official as the British Prime Minister was conveniently forgotten when the War ended and Thrace was given to Greece and Asiatic portions of the Turkish Empire were taken over by France and Great Britain as mandatories. The claim of the Muslim world that the 'Jazarat-Ul-Arab' including Mesopotemia, Arabia, Syria and Palestine with all the Holy Places in these territories must under all and any circumstances remain under the direct suzerainty of the Khalifa was utterly disregarded. This breach of faith on the part of the Allied powers including Great Britain aroused the Muslims to a great religious fervour. All attempts to secure a peaceful settlement of the Khilafat problem proved futile. The Indian Muslim Deputation headed by Maulana Mohammad Ali, to discuss the Khilafat problem with the British Prime Minister also had no success in its undertaking. All that they could elicit from the British authorities was that "Turkey could not be treated on principles different from those that were applied to the Christain countires," and that, "while "Turkey was to be allowed to exercise temporal sway ove-

Turkish lands, she was not to be permitted to retain those lands which were not Turkish." This reply from the British authorities meant the end of all constitutional attempts to solve the burning problem of the Khilafat which was so very dear to the heart of the Indian Muslims who finally resolved to take to the path of direct action under the inspiring leadership of Gandhiji who made the Muslim cause his own.

The Reign of Terror.

Meanwhile the Indian politics was in the melting pot. Gandhiji inaugurated the movement of Satyagraha with a fast and originallay declared 30th March, 1919 as a day of Hartal all over India. This day was later changed to 6th of April but demonstrations and processions were held in Delhi on the originally fixed day as the change was not notified in Delhi in time. Swami Shradhananda headed the procession when the military obstructed its peaceful march and threatened to shoot Swamiji. That brave and noble soul accepted the challange and bared his chest to the British bullets but none dared shoot him. The day in Delhi, however, was not to pass off uneventfully and at the Delhi railway station firing took place with five deaths and several casualties. And thus began the blood-bath through which India was destined to go for no other reason than the assertion of her right to self-determination.

The Punjab was the scene of most tragic incidents. The Punjabis—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs—are noted for their martial qualities and most ranks of the Indian army are drawn from the Punjab. The Congress in 1919 was invited to hold its session at Amritsar but the Government were determined to create circumstances in which the hold-

ing of the Congress session would be impossible and thus the Punjab would be 'saved' from the contamination of the unholy influence of the Congress. That province is the military citadel of the British power in India and the Government was determined at any cost to stop the conflagration of the Non-Co-operation Movement spreading to it. If the military races of the Punjab took part in India's national movement, then its would mean the beginning of the end of the British rule in India. The Government, therefore, decided to take firm action in the Province, nip in bud the Non-Co-operation Movement and make an example of it to the rest of India. They were waiting for an opportunity to release all the forces of repression at their disposal and the opportunity did present itself in the form of mob-violence provoked by Governmental action at some places in the Province, especially at Amritsar, Lahore, Gujaranwala, Kasur, and Sheikhpura. At these places all pretence to civilised methods of administration was shamelessly done away with and the Government resorted to terrific and barbarous methods to awe the people into submission. This forms one of the blackest chapters in the history of Indo-British connection and will always be remembered in commemoration of all the inumerable victims of Governmental terror who faced great trials and shed their blood in order that the honour and self-respect of the Motherland might be saved.

On the morning of April 10, 1919 the District Magistrate of Amritsar arrested Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal and sent them away to some unknown destination. The report of their arrest spread throughout the city and soon crowds began to form themselves into processions to have information from him regarding the whereabouts of their arrested

leaders. But the procession was stopped and fired upon resulting in two deaths and some casualties. This high-handed action on the part of authorities provoked the porcessionists to violence. On their way back the crowds set fire to the National Bank buildings and also some other public buildings and the railway goods shed. The people were so infuriated that five Europeans were also killed as a consequence of mob-violence. The local authorities on whom fell the responsibility of cool and sober thinking did not rise to the level the occasion demanded and handed over the town to the military authorities, thus betraying singular lack of understanding and capaity to deal with the situation in a normal way. Nay it may even be surmised, at such a distance of time, that the authorities were only waiting for an opportunity for unleashing their white hot rage on the innocent people for no other offence than their love for the Motherland. There was no declaration as yet of Martial Law and so on 30th April, 1919 a large public meeting was organised in the city in an enclosure named Jallianwalla Bagh, which is an open ground in the midst of the city enclosed on all sides with high walls. The Bagh has only one entrance which is so narrow that not even a carriage can pass along it. In this Bagh were assembed about 20,000 people of all communities. The atmosphere of the meeting was a peaceful one and the business of the meeting was being conducted in accordance with normal procedures followed in all such public meetings. The meeting was never organised to incite the public to violence against life or property. One local leader, Hansraj, was addressing the meeting when, as Destiny would have it, General Dyer entered the place of the meeting with 100 Indian and 50 British troops—all armed. He placed troops under his command at the entrance to the grounds and orde-

red the meeting to disperse. Now it is obvious that a gathering of 20,000 people could not disperse within a short space of time from an open ground enclosed on all sides by high walls and the only outlet blocked by the military. The people were not given even two minutes to disperse when he ordered firing which continued to take the toll of innocent lives till his party was exausted of its amunition. In all 1600 rounds were fired from an eleveted plaform. The casualties even according to the Government's version were about 400 dead while the wounded were estimated at "between a thousand and two.' The most inhuman feature of this tragic act was that the victims of the mad firing were left to suffer without either the Government rendering them any medical aid or allowing others to do so.

This firing without warning on the trapped and innocent people was approved of by higher authortities Sir. Miachel O'Dwyer, in a telegram to General Dyer says, "Your action correct. Lieutenant Governor approves." This approval clearly showed that the ultimate responsibility for the firing rested with the highest authority and not only with local authorities on the spot. It also showed that these barbarities were a part of the Government's well thought out policy to ruthlessly suppress the rising tide of Indian nationalism. Even when the feelings were subsided no word of repentance was ever uttered by those responsible for this inhuman tragedy. For example, General Dyer stated before the Hunter Committee appointed to inquire into the Punjab Affairs:—

> " It was a horrible duty I had to perform. I think it was a merciful thing. I thought that I should shoot well and

> shoot strong, so that I or anybody else should not have to shoot again. I think it is quite possible I could have dispersed the crowd without firing, but they would have come back again and laughed and I should have made what I consider to be a fool of myself."

What an idea of individual prestige and at what cost of innocent human blood was it preserved!

But the firing in the Jallianwala Bagh was the beginning and not the end of the Reign of Terror. In almost all civilised countries of the world, flogging as punishment even for confirmed criminals is seldom resorted to, while in cases of political offenders its use is strictly discouraged. But during the days of the Punjab Martial Law flogging was not only an every day occurance but it was resorted to even in public by the military authorities. Other methods of inflicting punishment and dishonour were invented. Thus, in Amritsar the water and the electric-supply of the city were cut off and so the whole town was put to hardship. General Dyer was also responsible for the notorious "Crawling order" whereby everyone passing through a certain lane in which a missionary lady doctor was attacked by the crowd, required to crawl with his belly to the ground despite the fact that the same lady doctor was protected by the decent inhabitants of the same lane. More than two persons abreast were prohibited from walking on side-walks or pavements. All the bicycles, carts, tongas, and motor-cars were commandeered by the military. All shop-keepers were required to keep open their shops under severe penalties including death and prices of their commotdities were fixed by the military authorities.

At other places in the Punjab the same tale of woe and terror repeated itself. In Lahore which is a large University town, the students of the colleges were ordered to report themselves to the military authorities four times a day. In one instance, the place where the students were to report themselves was at a distance of four miles away from their college and they had to walk that distance several times a day in the hot April sun. Curfew was strictly enforced and any person found on the street after 8 p. m. was liable to be shot. All private vehicles were taken over by the military authorities. Martial Law notices were posted on the walls of private buildings and the owners were ordered to protect them and were liable to severe punishment if in any way the notices were damaged or torn. Colonel O'Brien in charge of military administration in Gujaranwala, issued an order that,"when Indians met British officers they must salute, alight from their carriages, or dismount if they were riding or driving and lower their umbrellas if they were carrying any." For breach of this order people were flogged or fined or otherwise punished and this Colonel even had the boldness to state before the inquiring committee that, "the order was good by way of bringing home to the people that they had new masters." At many towns in the Punjab people were tied to telegraph posts, stripped of their clothes and publicly flogged in the presence of specially summoned gathering. At Kasur, a large public cage was erected near the railway station to accomodate 150 prisoners and exhibit them to public gaze like wild animals at a zoo. Even the children were not spared from all this horrible outrage on humanity. School-children were ordered to parade three times a day to salute the flag of the Empire. This order was applicable to children of so tender an age as five years. Fatalities from sun-stroke were alleged

and even the military authorities admitted that children fainted from undue exposure to sun. However the most disgusting thing of it all was that these innocent children were asked to repeat, "I have committed no offence. I will not commit any offence. I repent, I repent, I repent."

This is by no means at all a perfect picture and exaustive account of happenings in the Punjab during the Martial law days; but this brief account might suffice to bring home to the reader the madness of the Government which professed to be a civilised one but forfeited that claim by its brutal deeds imcomparable not only in the history of India but in the history of any other civilised nation in its dealings with the conquered people. The Nazi and Fascist atrocities of which the world has heard so much and condemned so repeatedly and rightly too—even those atrocities pale into insignificance before the atrocities perpetrated against the innocent men, women and children by the Punjab military authorities during the martial law regime in 1919.

The details of the Punjab happenings took months to reach other parts of India—so strict was the censorship and restriction on traffic. The Province was almost isolated from the rest of India and no Indian nationalist or for that matter even a philanthropic European was allowed to enter the province. Thus, Rev. C. F. Andrews was prohibited from entering the Punjab and Mr. B.G. Horniman, then the editor of the Bombay Chronicle, was deported for his strong and vehement condemnation of the Government's policy with regard to the Punjab happenings.

The Congress afterwards appoined a committee to enquire into this reign of terror and established beyond dispute

that the military action in the Punjab was nothing but a cold-blooded, calculated massacre of innocent, unoffending, unarmed men women and children, unpralleled for its heartless and cowardly brutality in modern times. Later on it was resolved to acquire the Jallianwala Bagh and raise a memorial there. This Bagh was acqired by a Committee under Pandit Malaviya's presidentship and there to this day one confronts an inscription which makes a memorial to the martyrdom of the common people who lost their lives on the fateful day of 13 th April, 1919. The inscriptisn reads:—

> "This ground was hallowed by tbe mingled blood of 1500 innocent Hindus, Musalmans and Sikhs who were martyred by British bullets on 13th April, 1919. The ground was acquired from the owners by public subscription.
>
> Secretary, Managing Committee,
> Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Trust,
> Amritsar."

To the left of this incription there is another sign-board which records the grim and brutal atrocity perpetrated against the innocent. It reads:

"People were fired from here."

And thus ends the Punjab episode whose mere record even at such a distance of time is blood-curdling but nonetheless whose memory still exalts us and instills in our hearts the flaming desire and passionate urge to destroy once for all by the combined might of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, that system of Government and ingenius scheming which even to-day has been an instrument in dividing one community against the other for imperial ends,

The Non-Co-operation Movement.

The Indian political situation of the time can be best summed up by reproducing the following Manifesto of the Indian National Congress delegation to England:—

Manifesto on the Situation in India.

"It is time that the British public had a clear vision regarding India where through the folly of the Government a cloud bigger than a man's hand has already gathered threatening to break into a storm, the dimensions of which no one can foresee. In moving a resolution conveying the thanks of Parliament to the forces engaged in the Great War Mr. Lloyd George said, 'As to India by her remarkable contribution to our triumph, notably in the East, she had won a new claim to our consideration, a claim so irresistible that it ought to overpower and must overpower all the prejudice and humility which might stand in the way of her progress.' So far as 'a new claim' is concerned, the Government of India since the Armistice has requited India's glorious services by legislative and adminstrative repression, depriving India of the freedom of the perss, freedom of speech, freedom of the person, provoking public protest and riots, particularly in the Punjab, with Martial Law, deportation of leaders beloved by the people, confiscation of property, supression of newspapers, execution, public flogging, imprisonment of prominent and patriotic citizens on fantastic charges, refusal of permission to choose counsel for their defence before military tribunals, shooting by machine-gun and bombing by military planes of defenceless men and women—a regime of blood and iron which, if practiced by Germans, would have filled Englishmen with horror and indignation.

"To make matters worse, a white-washing committee of inquiry has been appointed without any representation from the Indian National Congress and the Indian Muslim League and an Indemnity Bill passed by the Government of India which will prevent those officials who may be found guilty from being properly punished. Prussianism could no further go."

The report of the Hunter Commission was published on 20th May. It was condemned at a special session of the congress at Calcutta held in Septemeber, 1920. It expressed its opinion in a special Resolution:

"1. That the report submitted by the majority of the Hunter Committee is tainted by bias and race prejudice, based on insufficient consideration of evidence and characterised by too obvious a desire to slur over the proved, manifest inequities of the Government officials concerned, and to white-wash the conduct of the Punjab Government and the Government of India;

2. That the said report is unacceptable and unreliable inasmuch as it is based upon evidence which is incomplete, one-sided and biased by self-interest;

3. That the findings arrived at in the Majority Report are not justified even from the evidence actually on record and in any case, their recommendations fall far short of the minimum legitimate requirements of the case"

And the same resolution further proceeds:

(C) that with reference to the Government of India's review of the two reports of the Hunter Committee, this Congress records its deliberate opinion:

(i) that the said review accepts the findings of the majority without sifting or discrimination ;

(ii) that it pays scant and inadequate consideration to the arguments and findings of the Minority Report, even when such arguments and findigs are amply borne out by the evidence on record ;

(iii) that the whole drift and tendency of the said review is not to arrive at a just and impartial finding on fact but to hush up the whole affair and to throw a veil of oblivion upon the misdeeds of the officials concerned ;

(vi) that the action proposed to be taken in the review with reference to the conduct of guilty officials is grossly and utterly inadequate to the gravity of the state of things disclosed and has shaken all confidence in the fairness of British justice."

The Government paid scant attention to the outraged feelings of the country in regard to the Punjab Martial Law grievances. The Muslims of India were also agitating for a satisfactory solution of their Khilafat demands and in protest of injustice done by the Treaty of Sevre to Turkey. On refusal to concede their demands the Indian Muslims launched upon a new movement of Hijarat (flight) i.e. migration to adjoining Muslim country, Afganisthan. About 18,000 Muslims from Sind and the N.W.F. Province were involved in this movement. They had sold all their belongings in India and proceeded on a track to Afganisthan to settle in that country. These emigrants had a clash on the Indo-Afgan frontier with the troops at Karli and as a result the road to Kabul was "paved with their graves". The Afgan Government which had formerly permitted this immigration later on banned it.

The Rowlatt Bills were passed by the Imperial Legislative Council and put on the Statute Book inspite of the forcible contry-wide opposition to it. The constitutional reforms also fell far short of the country's expectation. The British Government declared in 1917 that their aim in India was "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progresive realisation of Responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire," and the same declaration promised "substantial steps in this direction as soon as possible." This proclamation was followed by the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report containing the outlines of the proposed constitutional reforms. The main feature of these reforms was the introduction of the system of dyarchy in the Provinces; which meant the division of provincial portfolios between British (reserved subjects) and Indian (transferred subjects) ministers. The power of certification and veto was also vested in the Viceroy and provincial Governors. The special Congress session at Calcutta in September, 1920 rejected these reforms as unsatisfactory and it was decided to boycott them.

The unsatisfactory Monfagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the Khilafat problem, the Rowlatt Bills, and the Punjab tragedy thus furnished a background for all India discontent and the Congress decided to start the movement of Non-co-operation under Gandhiji's leadership. At its Calcutta session the following Resolution on the Non-co-operation movement was adopted after a hot controversy between Gandhiji on one hand and Bipinchandra Pal and C. R. Das on the other.

"In view of the fact that on the Khilafat question both the Indian and Imperial Governments have signally failed in their duty towards the Muslims of India and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to

them, and that it is the duty of every non-Muslim Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Muslim brother in his attempt to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him ;

"And in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of the April of 1919, both the said Governments have grossly failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab and punish officers guilty of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them, and has exonerated Sir Michael O'Dyer who proved himself directly responsible for most of the official crimes and callous sufferings of the people placed under his administration and that the debate in the House of Lords betrayed an awful lack of sympathy with the people of India, and systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab, and that the latest Viceregal pronouncement is proof of entire absence of repentance in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab :

"This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of the two afforementioned wrongs and that only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of Swaraj.

"This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course left open to the people of India but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive non-violent non-co-operation inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi, until the said wrongs are righted and Swaraj is established ;

"And inasmuch as a beginning should be made by the classes who have hitherto moulded and represented public opinion and inasmuch as Government consolidates its power

through titles and honours bestowed on the people, through schools controlled by it, its Law Courts and its Legislative Councils and inasmuch as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice compatible with the attainment of desired object, this Congress earnestly advises ;

(a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies ;

(b) refusal to attend Government Levees, Durbars and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials, or in their honour ;

(c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by Government, and, in place of such schools and colleges, the establishment of national schools and colleges in the various provinces ;

(d) gradual boycott of British Courts by lawyers and litigants and the establishment of arbitration courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes ;

(e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia ;

(f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reformed Councils, and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice, offer himself for election ;

(g) boycott of foreign goods ;

"And inasmuch as Non-co-operation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice without which no nation can make real progress, and inasmuch as an opportu-

nity should be given in the very first stage of Non-co-operation to every man, woman, and child for such discipline and self-sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of Swadeshi in piece-goods on a vast scale, and inasmuch as the existing mills of India with indigenous capital and control do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, this Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving hand-spinning in every house and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement."

This resolution moved by Gandhiji was adopted, 1886 delegates voting for it and 884 voting against it.

The annual session of the Congress at Nagpur (1920) reaffirmed its firm faith in non-violent non-co-operation. The country at large also gave a hearty and encouraging response to this resolution. Several hundreds of students left their studies and many lawyers their practice in Law Courts. The boycott in respect of Legislative Councils was most successful. Almost 80 p.c. of the voters abstained from exercising their franchise and from several polling-booths the ballot-boxes were returned empty. Most of the nationalist candidates withdrew their candidature in response to the Congress resolution. Even the Government themselves admitted, "It is rather in connection with boycott of the new Councils that Mr. Gandhi's campaign of N.C.O. seems destined to exercise a potent influence upon the history of next few years. It has prevented the inclusion in the new legislatures of certain advanced thinkers who figure prominently in the public eye and has left the moderates a clear field."

The Nagpur session was also notable for another reason. At this session the creed of the Congress was changed from the one proclaiming its aim of colonial self-Government within the Empire, to be attained by constitutional means, to the new creed embodying the aim of "the attainment of swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means". For carrying on day-to day work of the Congress, the constitution of the Congress, revised at this session, provided for the appointment of an executive, called Working Committee of the Congress composed of fifteen members. This committee was empowered to take all important decisions, subject, of course, to ratification by the All India Congress Committee and the open session of the Congress.

At the Bombay A·I.C.C. meeting in 1921, the Congress leadership became so such radical as to express its opinion that, "It was the inherent right of the citizen to pronounce his opinion upon the advisability or otherwise of Government servants leaving Civil or Military service and that it was the inherent right of every citizen to appeal in an open manner to every soldier or civilian to sever his connection with a Government which had forfeited the confidence and support of a vast majority of the population of India."

The atmosphere in the contry was tense and filled with great expectations. The defiant mood of the Congress was backed by the Indian masses and very soon the ranks of the National Volunteer Corps of the Congress were swelled to great proportions. The Government declared the Volunteer organisation illegal. Most of the prominent Indian leaders were put behind the bar; these included C. R. Das, Lala Lajapatrai, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In all about more than 20,000 passive resisters were jailed. Gandhiji's open declaration that if his construc-

tive programme (hand-spinning and hand-weaving, abolition of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity) were adopted and carried out by the whole country, India would get Swaraj within a year i. e. by December 31, 1921. He went so far as to declare in September 1921, "that he was so sure of getting Swaraj before the end of the year that he could not conceive of himself as living beyond December 1921 without having won Swaraj." This further raised the intensity of feelings in the country, which burst out in a violent form at certain places. Especially on the Malabar coast tragic incidents occurred which shook the whole country. The unsophisticated Moplahs-Muslims by religion living on the Malabar coast-perpetrated inhuman barbarities on the Hindu population there. They resorted to loot, arson, murder, forcible conversion and rape. Previous to the occurrence to these tragedies the Government had banned the entry of distinguished Congress leaders, both Hindu and Muslim, into the Moplah areas. Therefore, the Congress movement of N. C. O. could not be held responsible for these outrages. Maulana Mohamed Ali, the Khilafat leader, had intended to visit the affected areas but on his way to Malabar he was arrested by the Government. Had he been allowed contact with the Moplahs, he would have certainly brought the situation under control. But the Government, as usual, distrusted the popular leaders and resorted to repression On the night of November 19,1921 about a hundred Moplah prisoners who were being taken to Bellari in a goods wagon suffocated to death.

During this period the prince of Wales also visited India. He was purposely sent to restore Royal prestige in India. But the Congress decided to boycott all celebrations in connection with his visit. The Congress, of course, wanted

the people to observe peace. However, in Bombay riots occurred in November 1921 in which fiftythree persons lost their lives and about four hundred were wounded. Complete hartal was observed wherever the Prince went on his tour. The people were resolved to attain success in their non-violent fight against the alien rule. By this time about 30,000 were jailed in various provinces in India. All attempts to bring about a peace between the Govt. and the Congress failed. The people were now waiting for the launching of the mass civil disobedience movement. No body knew what form it would take once it was launched. The country so far was uninitiated in the movement carried on a mass basis. Not even Gandhiji knew anything definite about it. He was not as yet prepared with his plan for mass movement. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, in his official Congress history, (p.376) writes:

"But mass disobedience was the thing that was luring the people. What was it, what would it be? Gandhi himself never defined it, never elaborated it, never visualised it even to himself. It must unfold itself to a discerning vision, to a pure heart, from step to step, much of the path-way in a dense forest would reveal itself to wayfarer's feet as he wends his weary way until a ray of light brightens the hope of an all but dispairing wanderer."

The Ahmedabad Congress (1921) met amidst a very sombre and tense atmosphere in the country under the presidentship of Hakim Ajmal Khan in place of Desh Bandhu C. R. Das, the president-elect, who was then in jail. This session adopted the following resolution on the non-co-operation movement:-

"Whereas since the holding of the last national Congress the people of India have found from actual experience that by reason of the adoption of non-violent, non-co-operation, the country has made great advance in fearlessness, self-sacrifice and self-respect, and whereas the movement has greatly damaged the prestige of the Govt. and whereas on the whole the country is rapidly progressing towards Swaraj, this Congress confirms the resolution adopted at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta and re-affirmed at Nagpur, and places on record the fixed determination of the Congress to continue the programme of non-voilent non-co-operation with greater vigour than hitherto in such a manner as each Province may determine, till the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed and Swarajya is established and the control of the Government of India passes into the hands of the people from that of an irresponsible corporation.

"And whereas by reason of the threat uttered by H. E. the Viceroy in his recent speeches, and cosequent repression started by the Government of India in the various Provinces by way of disbandment of volunteer corps and forcible prohibition of public and even Committee meetings in an illegal and high-handed manner, and by the arrest of many Congress workers in several Provinces, repression is manifestly intended to stifle all Congress and Khilaphat activities deprive the public of their assistance, this Congress resolves that all activities of the Congress be suspended as far as necessary, and appeals to all, quietly and without any demonstration to offer themselves for arrest by belonging to the Volunteer Organisations to be formed throughout the country in terms of the resolution of the Working Committe arrived at in Bombay on the 23rd day of November last,

provided that no one shall be accepted as volunteer who does not sign the following pledge:

"With God as witness I solemnly declare that,

1. I wish to be a member of the National Volunteer Corps.

2. So long as I remain a member of the Corps, I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent since I believe that, as India is circumstanced, non-violence alone can help the Khilafat and the Punjab and result in the attainment of Swaraj and communities of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsee, Christian or Jew.

3. I believe in, and shall endavour always to promote, such unity,

4. I believe in Swadeshi as essential for India's economic political and moral salvation, and shall use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth,

5. As a Hindu I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall on all possible occasions seek personal contact with, and endeavour to render service to, the submerged classes.

6. I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all the regulations not inconsistant with the spirit of this pledge prescribed by the Volunteer Board or any other agency established by the Congress.

7. I am prepared to suffer imprisonment, assault, or even death for the sake of my religion and my country without resentment.

8. In the event of my imprisonment, I shall not claim from the Congress any support for my family or dependents.

"This Congress trusts that every person of the age of 18 and over will immediately join the Volunteer Organisations.

"Notwithstanding the proclamation prohibiting public meetings, and in asmuch as even Committee meetings have been attempted to be construed as public meetings, this Congress advises the holding of Committee meetings and public meetings, the latter in enclosed places and by tickets and by previous announcements at which as far as possible, only speakers previouly announced shall deliver written speeches, care being taken in every case to avoid risk of provocation and possible violence by the public in consequence.

"This Congress is further of opinion that Civil Disobedience is the only civilised and effective substitute for an armed rebellion whenever every other remedy for preventing arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority by individuals or corporations has been tried, and therefore, advises all Congress workers and others who believe in peaceful methods and are convinced that there is no remedy, save some kind of sacrifice, to dislodge the existing Govt. from its position of perfect irresponsibility to the people of India, to organise individual civil disobedience and mass civil disobedience when the mass of people have been sufficiently trained in the methods of non-violence....."

In the latter part of the resolution the Congress authorised Mahatma Gandhi with the sole executive authority and invested him with full powers of the All India Congress Committee and also in the event of his arrest authorised him to appoint a successor in his place. Further the resolution appealed to those who did not believe in non-co-operation to carry on the constructive programme of the Congress for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

This session is also noteworthy for the hot discussion which ensued on the amendment of Hasarat Mohani who proposed that the word "Swaraj in the Congress creed should mean complete independence, free from all foreign control." Gandhiji vehemently opposed this change in the creed, especially in the midst of a 'battle' and the amendment was rejected. Later on, however, the Congress accepted it by a resolution in 1927 and embodied it in the creed itself in 1929 at its Lahore session.

After the Ahmedabad session the Congress was to take a step further in the direction of mass civil disobedience. Gandhiji had consented that the Bardoli taluka in Gujrat should launch the No-tax campaign under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Four other districts (Kitsna, Godavari, Guntur, and Cuddapah) also sought permission to start the No-tax campaign. But the Congress Working Committee advised them to take no such step. The Bardoli taluka was to be the field for experiment in mass movement and therefore the atmosphere in the whole country must remain peaceful and non-violent. The country must first prepare in the ways of non-violence and watch the results of the Bardoli experiment. The Guntur District, however, in anticipation of Congress approval, had already started No-tax campaign and

hardly five percent of the total taxes could be realized thereby the Government. Gandhiji, however, disapproved of this step being taken without his or the Congress Working Committee's formal consent and asked the local Congress leaders to withdraw the campaign and pay all Government dues. He wanted to concentrate all his attention, at any rate for the time being, on Bardoli. He wanted to make a success of the Bardoli experiment and also test the people as to how far they were trained in methods of non-violent non-co-operation. He, therefore, sent an "ultimatum" on 1st February, 1922 to the Viceroy giving him a seven days' time limit for a certain declaration which he wanted the Viceroy to make within the period. If the Viceroy failed to comply with the request he would give a call to start the mass movement in Bardoli.

The Viceroy's reply, however, was unsatisfactory and so no other course was left for Gandhiji who was making preparations for the country to switch over to the mass civil disobedience movement. He wanted to eliminate every possibility of violence breaking out in the country and desired to maintain a calm and peaceful atmosphere even under provocative circumstances. He would never allow his countrymen to follow the Biblical maxim, "An eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth."

With all his conditions the people were eager to come to grips with the Government and very eagerly awaited the call from their leader. But the awaited call did not come. Gandhiji's scrupulous care in avoiding all chances of violence breaking out in the country as a result of mass-campaign led him to take a very unexpected decision which was resented even by his lieutenants. Soon after his ultimatum

to the Viceroy, when he received the news of fatal happenings in the United Provinces, he was horrified and shocked. On the 5th February, 1922, at Chauri Chaura, a little village in the United Provinces, peasant mobs surrounded the police station and burnt it with all its inmates, twenty-one police constables and one sub-inspector of police.

Finding that the persistance in mass movement would result in letting loose the forces of violence in the country a meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress was hastily summoned at Bardoli to reconsider the situation in the country on 12th Febuary, 1922. The Working Committee enjoined upon all Congressmen "to stop all activities designed to court arrest and imprisonment, all volunteer processions and public meetings merely for the purpose of defiance of notifications". The Committee further laid stress on the constructive programme, "which included the enlisting of a crore of members, the popularizing of charka, organising of national schools, temperance and panchayat."

Thus all of a sudden a galloping race horse was pulled back. The whole country which was waiting for the order "to charge the enemy", was stunned to receive this order for "retreat". The trusted and veteran leaders like Pandit Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajapatrai disapproved of the Working Committee's Bardoli decision. Pandit Motilal Nehru was so much perturbed on receiving this news of the Committee's decision to suspend the C.D. movement that he "was beside himself with anger and sorrow". Many Congressmen doubted the wisdom of the Bardoli decision. True, they argued, Chauri Chaura outrage was horrible and disgraced the national movement. But that should not be the reason to suspend the movement, the aim of which was the redress of certain grie-

vances and "the establishment of Swaraj."—the objectives which still remained unfulfilled. The Congress, if it was really to lead the mass movement, must under any circumstances be at the vanguard of the movement, no matter whether the country remained peaceful or otherwise. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, even while he attempted to defend the Bardoli decision, had to admit that the decision "brought about a certain demoralisation." He further stated,"It is possible that this sudden bottling up of a great movement contributed to a tragic development in the country. The drift to sporadic and futile violence in the political struggle was stopped,but the suppressed violence had to find a way out, and in the following years this perhaps aggravated the communal trouble."*

Bengal and Maharashtra also opposed this move. They were definitely against the suspension of the movement at a critical time in the nation's history. Why should a small village where the outrage occurred be given so much importance in the nation's onward march towards freedom? In any mass movement the risk of such outrages occuring despite all precautions on the part of leadership was always there. If the movement was suspended for that reason then the people would give vent to their feelings through other channels and that may perhaps take a more deadlier form than what had already occurred in the country. But all these arguments were futile with Gandhiji who remained adamant, saying, " Those who went to jail were civilly dead" and could not therefore advise others who remained outside.

Gandhiji's firm resolve to suspend the civil disobedience movement at a time when the rank and file of the Congress were all out for it was construed into a betrayal of the masses

* Autobiography by Jawaharlal Nehru –p. 86

on the part of the Congress leadership with a view to effect a compromise with imperialism. The staunch opposition to Gandhi on this issue resulted in the waning of his influence in the country. The Government were seeking an opportunity to arrest him; but they dared not effect it at the height of his popularity. However, when his influence began to wane the Government seized the opportunity and arrested him on 30th March, 1922. Subsequently he was tried and sentenced to six years simple imprisonment. Gandhiji's statement in the court was a lucid elucidation of his theory of non-violent non-co-operation and a brilliant explanation of how he became a convert to it. This statement, we reproduce in full below.

Gandhiji's Statement.

"I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England, to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up, that I should explain why from a staunch loyalist and co-operator I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator. To the Court, too, I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.

"My public life began in 1893 in South Africa, in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of happy character. I discovered that, as a man and an Indian, I had no rights. On the contrary, I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian.

"But I was not baffled. I thought that this treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary

and hearty co-operation, criticising it fully where I felt it was faulty, but never wishing its destruction.

"Consequently when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1890 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it, raised a volunteer ambulance corps, and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith. Similarly in 1906, at the time of Zulu revolt, I raised a stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the 'rebellion'. On both these occasions, I received medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa, I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal. When the war broke out in 1914 between England and Germany, I raised a volunteer ambulance corps in London consisting of the the resident Indians in London, chiefly students. Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly, in India, when a special appeal was made at the war conference in Delhi in 1917 by Lord Chelmsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a corps in Kheda, and the hearty response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all these efforts at service I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen.

"The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horror, beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and other indescribable humiliations. I discovered too that the plighted word of the Prime Mintster to the Muslims of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likly to be fulfilled

"But inspite of the forboding and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919, I fought for co-operation and working the Montegu-Chelmsford Reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Muslims, that Punjab would be healed, and that the reforms inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India.

"But that hope was shattered. The Khilaphat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was whitewashed and the semi-starved masses of Indians are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realise that the Government by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery, can explain away the evidence the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiased examination of the Punjab Martial law cases has led me to believe that at least ninetyfive percent of convictions were wholly bad. My experience of political cases in India leads me to the conclusion that, in 9 out of every 10 the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in love of their country. In 99 cases out of 100 justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do with such cases. In my opinion the administration of the law

is thus prostituted, consciously or unconsciously, for the benefit of the exploiter.

"The greatest misfortune is that Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many English and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world, and that India is making steady though slow progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organised display of force on the one hand, and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit that has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124-A, under which I am happily charged, is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by Law. If one has no affection for a person or thing, one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence. But the section under which Mr. Banker and I are charged is one under which mere promotion of disaffection is a crime. I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India's patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under it. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill-will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection toward's the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be

disaffected towards a Government which, in its totality, has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system. And it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have written in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

"In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing in non-co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to tax the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation multiplies evil, and that, as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what, in Law, is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge and the Assessors, is either to resign your posts and thus dissociate yourselves from evil if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent, or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country, and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal."

His conviction and sentence of six years simple imprisonment removed him from the active leadership of the movement and therefore demoralisation set in the Congress ranks. The A.I.C.C. appointed a Civil Disobedience Commitee to make inquiries with regard to the civil disobedience movement, entry into the Legislative Councils and other matters. After an exhaustive inquiry the Committee recommended entry into the Legislative Councils. But the Gaya session (1922) rejected this recommendation and therefore the boycott on the Councils was not lifted. However, men of high integrity and influence such as C. R. Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Srinivasa Iyengar were in favour of Council entry and a battle royal continued to wage between the adherents of Gandhiji and the adherents of the school which supported Council entry—the 'no-changers' and the 'pro-changers.' Ultimately the latter won the battle and the special session of Congress (1923) by a resolution permitted the Council entry, laying down that "such Congressmen as have no scruples or other conscientious objections against entering the Legislatures are at liberty to stand as candidates and to exercise their right of voting at the forthcoming elections. And the Congress, therefore, suspends all propaganda against entry into the Councils."

Gandhiji was released from jail early released on February 5, 1924 after his serious illness due to appendicitis and the operation performed on him. This decision brought new hopes to 'no-changers.' C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru saw Gandhiji in connection with their programme of Council-entry and non-co-operation from within the Councils. Gandhiji could not reconcile himself to their programme. Nevertheless he advised his followers to maintain the attitude of hostility towards the Swaraj Party.* He issued a statement explaining

* The Party formed to contest the elections and carry

his differences with the S[illegible] would not allow those differences to come in the [illegible] Swaraj Party in its work within the Co[illegible]. He says, "I would therefore be [illegible] to put any obstacle in their way or to carrying on [illegible] against the Swarajists entry into the Legislatures [illegible] actively help them in a project in which I [illegible] the purpose of Delhi and Coconada resolutions [illegible] the Swarajists a chance of trying the method [illegible] entry and that purpose can be served only if the 'pro-changers' with scrupulous honesty, allow the Swarajists [illegible] to pursue their programme in the Councils unfettered by [illegible] from them."

He asked [illegible] to devote themselves whole-heartedly to the prosecution of the constructive programme with undivided energy and [illegible]." The Swarajists were gaining in influence in the Congress and it appeared as if they had eclipsed Gandhiji and assumed the leadership of the Congress. Though they pledged service to Gandhiji's leadership and his constructive programme their heart was not in that programme. However, they knew that their work within the Legislative Councils would be ineffective if they had no contact with the people. And the only link between them and the people was Gandhiji's constructive programme. Explaining the position of the Councils C.R. Das and Pandit Motilal [illegible], "In the first place we should give our whole-hearted support to the constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi and work that programme unitedly through the Congress organization. We are decidedly of opinion that our Councils must necessarily lose much of its strength without the backing of the constructive work out-

forward the fight on the Parliamentary plane within the new Legislatures. This party was to be loyal to the Congress,

side, for it is not inside but outside the Legislatures that we must look for that sanction without which the effective carrying out of our Council policy is impossible. Indeed, in the matter of constructive work, the mutual support of both inside and outside activity must, in our opinion, give strength to the very sanction upon which we rely."

The masses who had developed politcal consciousness in the post-war period were bewildered by this manoeuvring on the part of the Congress leadership. None of the people's grievances, for which the agitation was started and the non-co-operation movement was launched, were redressed. And yet the people were prevented from coming into grips with bureaucracy by the Congress decision at Bardoli to suspend the movement. But the suppressed steam of highly inflamed feelings must find some outlet and when active participation in any form of political movement was not possible because of the withdrawl of struggle itself, communal passions took hold of the people and the country witnessed bloody communal outrages. The ship of Hindu-Muslim unity foundered on the rock of these communal riots and the antagonism between these two communities has come to be regarded since then almost as a historical fact to be reckoned with as such. Gandhiji was hurt by the orgy of violence and communal riots in the country and holding himself responsibe for them undertook a twentyone days' fast "to expiate his own guilt."

The next session of the Congress at Belgaum (1924) was held under Gandhiji's presidentship. In this Congress he blessed the work of the Swarajists and explained thereafter some of the points relating to the Swaraj-scheme—Swaraj as understood by him—in the following manner:-

"Manual labour to be the qualification for a franchise; the reduction of military expenditure, the cheapening of justice, the abolition of intoxicating liqueurs and drugs and revenues therefrom, reduction of civil and military salaries, re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis, examination of monopolies of foreigners, guarantee of status to Chiefs without any hindrance from the central Govt., repeal of arbitrary powers, abolition of race distinction in services and religious freedom to various denominations, administration through vernacular languages, and Hindi to be national language."

But soon after this Congress differences between Gandhiji and the Swaraj Party began to grow steadily. Gandhiji's political philosophy was imbibed with religion and non-violence. There was not much of dazzling intellect or any system of logic in it. On the other hand, the Swarajists were led by men like C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru—men of keen intellect as sharp and penetrating as a surgeon's knife. But they were cut off from the masses. Except for some vague philosophising and general sympathy for their plight, these leaders had no genuine relationship with the masses which could secure for them their support. And therefore they wanted Gandhiji as their link with masses. Whatever Gandhiji's shortcomings it was a fact beyond dispute that he was the most loved and respected of all the political leaders and his influence over the masses was unquestionable They also wanted Gandhiji's leadership without his terms which laid particular emphasis on spinning and the rest of the constructive programme. C. R. Das was most prominent at that time among the leaders of the Swaraj Party and had a unique glory around him; for he had led his camp successfully

within the Council and wrecked the dyrachy (1919 Reforms) in Bengal by refusing to form a ministry though he commanded majority in the Council. He grew in the esteem of his countrymen because of the success after success he achieved in the Council work. Gandhiji felt the need–temporary one perhaps–of retiring and allowing others to take his vacated place. He wrote, "I must no longer stand in the way of the Congress being developed and guided by educated Indians rather than by one like myself who has thrown in his lot entirely with the masses, and who has fundamental drffere nces with the mind of educated India as a body. I will want to act upon them but not leading the Congress. The best way in wich I can help that activity is by removing myself out of the way, and by concentrating myself solely upon constructive work with the help of the Congress and in its name, and that too, only so far as educated Indians will permit to do so."

Gandhiji voluntarily removed himself from active politics and left the field clear for the veterans of the Swaraj Party to fight the Government within the Councils. The only event somewhat of an outstanding character in the later period was the interest the Congress displayed in the international field. In 1926 it sent a message of sympathy to China and took interest in the working of the League against Imperalism and for National Independence which held its session in Brussels and at which India was represented by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who was on a prolonged tour on the European continent establishing contacts with the Socialist movement there.

In 1926, Swami Shradhanand, a prominent Hindu leader, was murdered by a Muslim fanatic in Delhi whic

added to the tension already prevalent between the two communities and as a result communal riots began to spread all over the country.

Amidst this rioting and political 'standstill' atmosphere, a bomb-shell was thrown in the form of the appointment of the Simon Commission announced on November 8, 1927. It was to make inquiries "into the working of the system of Government, the growth of education and the development of representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith and reporting whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of Reposnsible Government or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of Responsible Government then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of Second Chambers of the Local Legislatures is or is not desirable." Not a single Indian, official or non-official was given a place on this Commission and this aroused countrywide feelings of hostility to it. The procedure to be adopted by the Commission was as set below:—

"When the Commission has reported and its Report has been examined by the Govt. of India and His Majesty's Govt. it will be the duty of the latter to present proposals to the Parliament but it is not the intention of His Majesty's Govt. to ask Parliament to adopt these proposals without first giving an opportunity to Indian opinion of different schools to contribute its view upon them. And to this end, it is intended to invite Parliament to refer these proposals for consideration by a Joint Committee of both Houses, and to facilitate the presentation to that Committee both of the views of the Indian Central Legislature by delegations who

will be invited to attend and confer with the Joint Committee and also of any other bodies whom the J. P. C. may desire to consult.

"The method chosen by His Majesty's Govt. will also assure to Indians a better opportunity, than they would have enjoyed in any other way of influencing the passage of these great events. For not only will they, through representives of the Indian Legislatures, be enabled to express themselves freely to the Commission itself, but it will also be within their powers to challenge in detail or principle any of the proposals made by His Majesty's Government before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament and to advocate their own suggestions."

The absence of Indian representation on the Commission was an affront and a challenge to the Nation. It was a positive denial of India's right to self-determination—a right to defend which Indian blood was spilt on the European soil not so very long ago in the Great War. The appointment of the Simon Commission exclusively of British composition was tantamount to asserting in a most aggressive manner that it was great Britain that finally retained the decisive power with regard to any future constitutional set up in India. This assertive manner and utter disregard of the Indian feelings roused the indignation of the Indian nation and almost all political parties that carried any weight were one in condemming the Commission and vindicating India's honour by boycotting it. The Madras Congress (1927) gave a clear lead in the matter and called upon the country to boycott the Commission. The boycott advocated by the Congress was supported by other political parties and the whole country resen-

ted the presumptive attitude of the British Government and wanted to vindicate its national honour by whatever means possible. The Commission landed in Bombay on February 3, 1928 and on the same day an all India 'hartal' was observed. Wherever the Commission went in connection with its work it met with cries of "Go back, Simon." The Government as usual lost its balance and resorted to force. Forceful dispersion of hostile crowds, lathi charges and firing became the usual occurrences all over the country. The boycott of the Commission was most successful and it finally led the Government to adopt severer methods in dealing with crowds that were gathering in hostile demonstrations. Men of high eminence and esteem in the people's eyes such as Lala Lajpatrai and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru were also not spared when the police resorted to lathi charges. The assault on Lalaji was most brutal and barbarous and sometime later that valient fighter for freedom succumbed to his injuries.

In February, 1928, an AllParties Conference was summoned in Delhi. Principal parties were represented at the Conference at which it was agreed that the future constitution of India should be on the basis of full responsible Government. It was also agreed that a special committee under the presidentship of Pandit Motialal Nehru be appointed to draft a constitution for India. This Committee later produced a report known as the 'Nehru Report' which declared in favour of Dominion Status. The All Parties Conference adopted this Report without prejudice to the right of other parties whose goal was complete independence.

Now the lull of the preceding years was coming to an end. Bardoli again came to the forefront. Formerly Mahat-

ma Gandhi had planned to launch a mass civil disobedience campaign but from time to time he was obliged to abandon it altogether. But now the Government supplied a new cause for the agitation in Bardoli. The Government planned in 1928 re-assessment of land revenue that would have led to increase in taxes to which the peasantry was opposed. They did not oppose the reassessment as such, but demanded that an impartial committee should be appointed "to investigate the conditions of the labour, roads, prices, economic outlook and taxation, to see if enhancement was to be effected and if so, how much." The Govt. as was its wont, was deaf to this request and the peasants were required to pay an enhanced revenue of 25 %. The peasantry as a class refused to pay the enhanced revenue and ultimately the Govt. and the people came in confict with each other on the issue. Both were equally determined in their resolve not to submit an inch of ground they held. The Governor of Bombay declared that all resources of the Empire would be used to crush the 'No-Tax Campaign' in the Bardoli taluka. The Government resorted to all sorts of repressive methods and also tried to incite the communal feelings of the peasantry. But the whole lot of them—Hindus, Muslims and others—remained adamant under Vallabhbhai Patel's leadership. They also remained non-violent throughout their 'No-Tax Campaign' and did not in any way oppose the attachment of their land or any other moveable or immoveable property. The marvellous descipline and unity they displayed and the unique self-sacrifice to which they submitted themselves ungrudgingly finally brought them an unparalleled victory. The Government appointed a Court to inquire into the capacity of the peasants to pay the enhanced taxes and this Court

finally declared that taxation should be increased to no more than 6¼ p.c. This was the first clear victory of the people over the Government and it restored country's self-confidence in its capacity to wield the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation to achieve victory.

Under Motilal Nehru's presidentship the Congress held its session at Calcutta in 1928 and received messages of sympathy and congratulation from eminent personalities such as Mrs. Sunyat Sen and M. Romain Rolland. This Congress accepted the Nehru Report as a compromise and gave an ultimatum to the British Government to accept it in its entirty before the lapse of one year i. e. before December 31, 1929. If the British Government did not accept it by the time limit given by the Congress the country would be advised to start the Non-co-operation movement, beginning with the 'No-Tax Campaign.' The resolution accepting the Nehru Report and giving the ultimatum to the Government was as follows —

"This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All Parites' Committee Report welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations, and, whilst adhering to the Resolution relating to complete independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves of the Constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

"Subject to the exigencies of the political situation, this Congress will adopt the constitution if it is accepted in its

entirety by the British Parliament on or before 31st December 1929, but in the event of its non-acceptance by the date or its earlier rejection the Congress will organise a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

"Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on in the name of the Congress the propaganda for Complete Independence."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose were against giving any time-limit or accepting Dominion Status. They wanted the Congress to adhere strictly to the Madras resolution of Complete Independence. The original resolution was changed and instead of two year's time limit as proposed by Gandhiji only one year's time-limit was given and the compromise resolution as stated above was passed.

The clouds were gathering and it was apparent that at any moment the storms might break out. The country was, therefore called upon by another resolution to prepare itself for the fight ahead by taking to constructive programme in right earnest. The same resolution also made provision for "Picketing of Liqueur and Drug Shops," "Boycott of Foreign Cloth" and "such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its department and in order to enable the Congress to secure the co-operation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits."

Struggle was in the air and during 1929-30 the nation was preparing for it. In February, 1929, Gandhiji wrote, "A voice from within tell me that I must not only hold

myself in readiness to do what comes my way, but I must even think out and suggest means for working out what, to me, is a great programme. Above all, I must prepare myself for the next year's struggle whatever shape it may take."

The year 1929 opened with a struggle between the Govt. and the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly over the Public Safety Bill. The previous year when this Bill was moved by the Government for the first time in the Legislative Assembly the Nationalists opposed it and when the House was equally divided Vithalbhai Patel, the President, cast his vote against the Bill. In April 1929, the Government again sought to reconsider the Bill; but the President disallowed it on the grounds that "The rules of business of this House provide that no question shall be asked nor any resolution moved in regard to any matter which is under adjudication in a Court of Law having jurisdiction in any part of His Majesty's Dominion." The Bill could not be discussed without reference to the Meerut Conspiracy Case, which was a matter sub-judice. The president, therefore, posed two alternatives before the Government; the one was if : the Government wanted to discuss the Bill in the Assembly they should withdraw the case. On the other hand if they did not wish to withdraw the case they must not seek to move the Bill in Assembly. He wished that he should not be forced to give his ruling in the matter and therefore asked the Government to consider these alternatives and act accodingly. The Goverment, however, insisted upon moving the Bill; thereupon the President disallowed it. The Viceroy, however, used his power of certification and issued an Ordinance whereby he gave the executive the powers sought to be given by the Bill.

This session of the Legislative Assembly is memorable for another incident. When the House was reassembling after a division on the Trades Dispute Act two bombs were thrown towards the official benches from the visitor's gallery. Nobody was seriously injured, but it was an indication of the recrudescence of terrorism and a warning to the Government. The year 1929 witnessed once again the ruthless machine of Government repression set in motion There was the famous Meerut Trial in which the prominent leaders of the working class from all over the country as also some foreigners were involved. The charge against them was that they were spreading communist propaganda in India. By this time the Labour movement in India had begun to attract notice. There was a big strike-wave in Bombay which involved 150000 of them. 25000 Jute-workers in Bengal also struck work. Labour, as a class in India was beginning to exert its influence in the Indian political life. The Meerut trial was staged in all probability to effectively deal with the labour unrest and remove the possibility of the Indian working class taking part in the ensuing freedom struggle.

In October, 1929 and the months following it events began to move fast. The Viceroy Lord Irwin, who had been to London for consultation with the British Government returned to India on 25th October, 1929 and on 31st October, made a public statement on the British Government's policy towards constitutional development in India. The last paragraph of the statement read:

"The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August, 1917 to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in

India as an integral part of the British Empire. As I recently pointed out, my own Instrument of Instructions from the King Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans laid by Parliament in 1919 should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among his Dominions. Ministers of the Crown, moreover, have more than once publicly declared that it is the desire of the British Government that India should, in the fullness of time, take her place in the Empire in equal partnership with the Dominions. But in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919, I am authorised on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the declaration of 1917, that the natural issue of India's constitutionl progress as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status."

The Congress Working Committee along with other distinguished Indian leaders gave their most careful consideration to the above statement and made public their reaction to the Government's policy as outlined in it. The Committee was hopeful of a recociliation with the Government as there was a change in the British Cabinet and Labour Government under the premiership of Ramsey MacDonald was installed in power. The conciliatory gesture and the tone of the statement gave hope to the country that the Labour Government was in favour of adopting a more liberal and progressive policy towards India. Therefore the Congress Working Committee along with certain other leaders of Indian political thought issued a joint Manifesto in response to the British Government's statement of poticy. The Manifesto issued by them was as follows :—

"We hope to be able to tender our co-operation to His Majesty's Govt. in their effort to evolve a scheme of Dominion constitution suitable to India's need, but we deem it necessary that certain acts should be done and that certain points should be cleared so as to inspire trust and ensure the co-operation of the principal political organisations in the country.

"We consider it vital for the success of the proposed Conference that,

(a) a policy of general conciliation should be adopted to induce a calmer atmosphere,

(b) political prisoners should be granted an amnesty,

(c) the representation of progressive political organisations should be effectively secured, and the Indian National Congress, as the largest among them, should have a predominent representation.

"Some doubt has been expressed about the interpretation of the paragraph in the Statement made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government regarding Dominion Status. We understand, however, that the Conference is to meet not to discuss when Dominion Status is to be established, but to frame a scheme of Dominion for India. We hope we are not mistaken in thus interpreting the import and implications of the weighty pronouncement of H. E. the Viceroy. Until the new Constitution comes into existence, we think it necessary that a more liberal spirit should be infused in the Government of the country, that the relations of the Executive and the Legislature should be brought more in harmony with the object of the proposed Conference and that greater regard should be paid to constitutional methods and practices. We hold it to be abosolutely essential that the public should be made to feel that a new era has commenced even from today,

and that the new constitution is to be but a register of that fact. Lastly, we deem it an essential factor for the success of the Conference that it should be convened as expeditiously as possible."

The response to the above joint manifesto came in the form of an invitation from the Viceroy to meet him in new Delhi on 23rd of December, 1929. On the same day the Viceroy's train met with a bomb accident, but he was not in the least perturbed by it and had a frank discussion with Gandhiji and other leaders invited by him. In the ensuing discussion he could not assure the Congress through Gandhiji that the proposed Round Table Conference should be held on the basic principle of Dominion Status while Gandhiji had insisted that the discussions at the Round Table Conference should be held on the acceptance of that principle only. Consequently these discussions were without any result and the Congress remained free to chalk out its own path to achieve its aim of complete independence.

The Lahore Session (1929) was held under the presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In the presidential election Gandhiji was elected to be the president of the Lahore Congress. But he was aware of the growing discontent in the left-wing of the Congress and therefore to reconcile the younger element in the Congress he stepped aside and proposed that in his place Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be elected. This session was destined to be one of the momentous ones in the Congress history. The Presidential address was a departure from the previous similar addresses given by his predecessors. In his address he pointed out that India's national problem was not an isolated one. In the modern world no nation could isolate itself from

its international connections. He also dealt with other peculiar problems pertaining to the Indian minorities, Indian States, labour and peasantry. In his speech he stated,

> "India today is a part of a world movement and cannot isolate herself from it. And if India has a message to give to the world as I hope she has, she has also to receive and learn much from messages of other people. The time has indeed already come when the All Parties' Report has to be put aside and we march forward unfettered to our goal. Indpendence for us means complete freedom from British domination and British Imperialism. We stand therefore, today for the fullest freedom of India. The Congress has not acknowledged and will not acknowledge the right of British Parliament to dictate to us in any way. To it we make no appeal.
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> "I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican and am no believer in Kings and Princes or in an order which produces the modern Kings of industry who have greater powers over the lives and fortunes of men than even kings of old whose methods are predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy.
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> "The Congress will gain in strength, however small its actual membership may become if it acts in a disciplined way. Small determined minorities have changed the fate of nations. Mobs and crowds can do little. Freedom itself involves restraint and discipline and each one of us will have to subordinate himself to the larger good. Success often comes to those who dare and act. It seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play high stakes and if we seek to achieve great things it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late none but ourselves can stop

us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our long and splendid history.

"We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule and all our countrymen are willing to join it. But the rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison and it may be death."

In the same speech he dealt with the question of non-violence and expressed his views on it. This is what he said:

"Violence so often brings reaction and demoralisation in its train and in our country, especially, it may lead to disruption. It is perfectly true that organised violence rules the world and it may be that we could profit by its use. But we have not the material or the training for organised violence, and individual or sporadic violence is a confession of despair. The great majority of us, I take it, judge the issue not on moral but on practical grounds and if we reject the way of violence it is because it promises no substantial results. Any great movement for liberation must necessarily be a mass-movement and mass-movement must essentially be peaceful, except in time of organised revolt."

The chief question before the Lahore Congress was the question of Complete Independence in accordance with the Resolution passed at the last session at Calcutta. The time-limit of one year given to the Government to accept the Nehru Report was coming to an end. It was time that Congress took cognisance of this fact and acted accordingly. The Congress rose to the occasion declared itself in favour of Complete Independence and passed the following resolution:-

"This Congress endorses the action of the Working Committee in connection with the Manifesto signed by party

leaders, including Congressmen, on the Viceregal pronouncement of the 31st October relating to Dominion Status, and appreciates the efforts of the Viceroy towards a settlement of the national movement for Swaraj. The Congress, however, having considered all that has since happened and the result of the meeting between Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru and other leaders, and the Viceroy, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. This Congress, therefore, in pursuance of the resolution passed at its session at Calcutta last year, declares that the word 'Swaraj' in Art. 1 of the Congress Constitution shall mean Complete Independence, and further declares the entire scheme of the Nehru Committee's Report to have lapsed, and hopes that all Congressmen will henceforth devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of Complete Independence for India. As a preliminary step towards organising a campaign for Independence, and in order to make the Congress policy as consistent as possible with the change of Creed, this Congress calls upon Congressmen and others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating directly or indirectly in future elections, and directs the present Congress members of the Legislatures and Committees to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the Nation zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress, and authorises the All-India Congress Committee, whenever it deemed fit, to launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience including non-paymnet of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary."

On the midnight of 31st, December 1929, the Congress President, Jawaharlal Nehru, unfurled the tricolour flag of Complete Independence on the banks of the river Ravi, *It*

was a cold December night but vast crowds attended the flag-hoisting ceremony. The tricolour flag was the symbol of the nation's will and strong resolve to free herself completely from foreign bondage. The time-limit given to the British Government to accept the Nehru Report had elapsed and Congress was now entirely free to follow its own path for the attainment of her goal of Complete Independence. The country would no longer submit to a foreign rule and it expressed its strong determination to achieve complete independence, whatever obstructions might be placed in her march towards the goal. The vast crowds that had gathered on the banks of Ravi were a symbol of the Nation's will. Pandit Jwaharlal Nehru in a most solemn manner administered to those crowds a pledge of Independence.

The Congress working Committee in January, 1930 issued an appeal to members of Legislative Councils to resign their seats and come out and also decided that January 26, should be observed as an'Independence day' and in public meetings, in towns and villages on that day the following pledge of Independence should be taken:—

—: INDEPENDENGE PLEDGE :—

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any Government deprives tha people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or abolish it. The British Government has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India, economically,

politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence.

India has been ruined economically, The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven pice (less than two pence) per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay twenty per cent are raised from the land revenue derived from the peasantry and three per cent from the Salt-tax, which falls most heavily on the poor.

Village industries, such as hand spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports. Customs duty betray partiality for British manufactures, and revenue from them is used not to lessen the burden on the masses but for sustaining a highly extravagant administration. Still more arbitrary has been the manipulation of exchange ratio which has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. No reforms have given real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. The rights of free expression and free association have been denied to us, and many of our countrymen are compelled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to their homes. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.

Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will, therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary associations from the British Government, and will prepare for Civil Disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore, hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congrsss instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Swaraj.

The response to the Congress call to observe Independence Day on January 26 and take the Independence pledge was tremendous throughout the length and breadth of the country. It was as if the people had spontaneously gathered a momentum that inevitably led them on from step to step on their way of Freedom March. The possibility of evolution of any formula that might compromise the

Congress demand of Complete Independence was day by day receding. The Viceroy had proposed the holding of a Round Table Conference but this Conference was only meant to elucidate from Indian leaders their views on India's constitutional progress, while the final authority of taking decisions rested with the British Government. In adopting this procedure the British Government flouted the basic principle of self-determination. It would not abide by the decisions taken by the Indian leaders and for this reason the Congress was unwilling to take any part in the forthcoming Round Table Conference. As a last attempt to avoid clash with the Government Mahatma Gandhi made a final offer to the Viceroy and declared that if he could find his way to accept it the Congress would take this Viceregal acceptance to be a gesture of goodwill on the part of the Government and would therefore reconsider its policy in the light of this gesture. The offer included eleven points as cited below:-

1. Total prohibition
2. Reduction of ratio to 1 s. 4 d.
3. Reduction of Land Revenue at least by fifty per cent and making it subject to Legislative control.
4. Abolition of Salt Tax.
5. Reduction of Military expenditure at least by 50 %, to begin with.
6. Reduction of salaries of the highest grade services by half or less, so as to suit the reduced revenue.
7. Protective tariff on foreign cloth.
8. Passage of the coastal traffic reservation Bill.
9. Discharge of all political prisoners, save those condemned for murder or attempt to murder, or trial by

ordinary Judicial tribunals, withdrawal of all political prosecutions, abrogation of Section 124 A. and Regulation III of 1818, and giving permission to all Indian exiles to return.

10. Abolition of the C. I. D., or its popular control.
11. To issue licenses to use firearms for self-defence, subject to popular control.

This list was by no means exhaustive and if the Government could accept it Mahatma Gandhi would have had no hesitation in advising the Congress to make a change in its policy and programme of contemplated mass Civil Disobedience Movement. He wrote, "...let the Viceroy satisfy us with regard to these very simple but vital needs of India. He will then hear no talk of Civil Disobedience; and the Congress will heartily participate in any conference where there is a perfect freedom of expression and demand."

But the gesture expected from the Viceroy was not forthcoming and the Congress was left with no other alternative but to embark on the path of Civil Disobedience movement. Subsequently, its Working Committee met at Sabarmati on the 14th, 15th and 16th February and discussed the problem of Council boycott. In one of its former resolutions it had called upon members of Legislative Council to resign their seats in the Legislatures.

Accordingly some members had already resigned; but some of them resought elections on their resignation. The Working Committee took strong exception to those who had either not resigned or after their resignation sought re-election and threatened them with disciplinary action if they did not either resign or withdraw their candidature. It pas-

sed another resolution in which it dealt with the impending Civil Disobedience Movement. The Resolution runs:

"In the opinion of the Working Committee, civil disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence, for the purpose of achieving 'Purna Swaraj,' as an article of faith and as the Congress contains in its organisation not merely such men and women but also those who accept non-violence as a policy essential in the existing circumstances in the country, the Working Committee welcomes the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi and authorises him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith to the extent above indicated, to start civil disobedience as and when they desire and in the manner and to the extent they decide. The Working Committee trusts that when the campaign is actually in action, all Congressmen and others will extend to the civil resister their full co-operation in every way possible and they will observe complete non-violence notwithstanding any provocation that may be offered. The Working Committee further hopes that, in the event of mass movement taking place, all who are rendering voluntary co-operation to the Government, such as lawyers and those who are receiving so called benefits from it, such as students, will withdraw their co-operation or renounce benefits as the case may be and throw themselves into the final struggle for Freedom.

"The Working Committee trusts that in the event of the leaders being arrested and imprisoned those who are left behind and have the spirit of sacrifice and service in them will carry on the Congress organisation and guide the movement to the best of their ability."

The nation was now earnestly preparing for the oncoming struggle. The Congress had authorised Mahatma Gandhi to conduct the struggle and appoint his successors in case of his arrest. Mahatma Gandhi's way of conducting the struggle was a peculiar one. In any ordinary conflict between one state and another or between rulers and the ruled those who initiate the struggle do not give out their plans or expose to the enemies the position of weakness in their front. But the fight that Mahatma Gandhi was contemplating to lead was one to be conducted on a higher spiritual and moral plane. To him the methods of violence were an enigma. He was a firm believer in the ultimate results of non-violence and truth. The non-violence that he wanted to preach to the nation and through it to the whole world was non-violence of the brave. Even under severest provocation one was not to retaliate even if he possibly could. He strictly warned the nation against the use of violence in any way or form. In case of his arrest the nation was to carry on the struggle in the most non-violent way and not to deviate from the path he had already chalked out for the nation. But before he himself embarked upon the struggle he tried every means to see if he could honourably avoid it and consequently spare the sufferings of the country and the people that they would inevitably have to undergo, once the struggle was launched. Therefore as is his wont before starting any movement he wrote to the Viceroy, explaining to him the reasons that led him to take this course. In this letter he explained how British rule in India has been the chief factor in causing her spiritul, political, economic and moral degradation. Here we reproduce this famous letter to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin.

LETTER TO LORD IRWIN.

Satyagraha Ashram,
Sabarmati. March 2, 1930.

Dear Friend,

Before embarking on Civil Disobedience, and taking the risk I have dreaded to take all these years, I would fain approach you and find the way out. My personal faith is absolutely clear. I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives, much less fellow human beings, even though they may do the greatest wrong to me and mine. Whilst, thefore, I hold the British Rule to be curse, I do not intend harm to a single Englishman or to any legitimate interest he may have in India.

I must not be misunderstood. Though I hold the British Rule in India to be a curse, I do not, therefore, consider English men in general to be worse than any other people on earth. I have the privilege of claiming many Englishmen as dearest friends. Indeed much that I have learnt of the evil of British Rule is due to the writings of frank and courageous Englishmen who have not hesitated to tell the unpalatable truth about that Rule.

And why do I regard the British Rule as a curse?

It has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation and by a ruinously expensive military and civil administration which the country can never afford.

It has reduced us politically to serfdom. It has sapped the foundations of our culture and, by the policy of disarmament, it has degraded us spiritually. Lacking the inward srength, we have been reduced by all but universal disarmament, to a state bordering on cowardly helplessness.

In common with many of my countrymen, I had hugged the fond hope that the proposed Round Table Conference might furnish a solution. But, when you said plainly that you could not give any assurance that you or the British Cabinet would pledge yourselves to support a scheme of full Dominion Status. The Round Table Conference could not possibly furnish the solution for which vocal India is consciously and the dumb millions are unconsciously thirsting. Needless to say there never was any question of Parliament's verdict being anticipated. Instances are not wanting of the British Cabnet, in anticipation of the Parliamentary verdict, having pledged itself to a particular policy.

The Delhi interview having miscarried, there was no option for Pandit Motilal Nehru and me but to take steps to carry out the solemn resolution of the Congress arrived at in Calcutta, at its session in 1928.

But the resolution of independence should cause no alarm if the word Dominion Status mentioned in your announcement had been used in its accepted sense. For, has it not been admitted by responsible British statesmen that Dominion Status is virtual Independence? What, however, I fear is that there never has been any intention of granting such Dominion Status in India in the immediate future.

But this is all past history. Since the announcement many events have happened which show unmistakably the trend of British policy.

It seems as clear as daylight that responsible British statesmen do not contemplate any alteration in British policy that might adversely affect Britian's commerce with India or require an impartial and close scrutiny of Britain's transaction

with India. If nothing is done to end the process of exploitation, India must be bled with an ever increasing speed. The Finance Member regards as a settled fact the 1 s. 6 d. ratio which, by a stroke of the pen drains India of a few crores. And when a serious attempt is being made, through a civil form of direct action, to unsettle this fact among many others even you crush that attempt in the name of an order that grinds India to atoms.

Unless those who work in the name of Nation understand, and keep before all concerned, the motive that lies behind the craving for Independence, there is every danger of Independence itself coming to us so unchanged as to be of no value to those toiling voiceless millions for whom it is sought and for whom it is worth taking. It is for that I have been recently telling the public what Independence should really mean.

Let me put before you some of the salient points.

The terrific pressure on Land Revenue, which furnishes a large part of the total, must undergo considerable modification in an Independent India. Even the much vaunted Permanent Settlement benefits the few rich Zamindars, not the ryots. The ryot has remained as helpless as ever. He is a mere tenant-at-will.

Not only, then, has the Land Revenue to be considerably reducd, but the whole revenue system has to be so revised as to make the ryot's good its primary concern. But the British system seems to be designed to crush the very life out of him. Even the salt he must use to live is so taxed as to make the burden fall heaviest on him, if only because of the heartless impartiality of its incidence The tax shows itself still more

burdensome on the poor man, when it is remembered that salt is the one thing he must eat more than the rich man, both individually and collectivvely. The drink and drug revenue, too, is derieved from the poor. It sapps the foundations both of their health and morals. It is defended under the false plea of individual freedom, but in reality, is maintained for its own sake. The ingenuity of the authors of the Reforms of 1919 transferred this revenue to the so called responsible part of Dyarchy, so as to throw the burden of prohibition on it, thus, from the very beginning, rendering it powerless for good. If the unhappy Minister wipes out this revenue, he must starve education, since in the existing circumstances he has no new source of replacing that revenue. If the weight of taxation has crushed the poor from above, the destruction of the central supplementary industry, i. e. hand spinning has undermined their capacity for producing wealth.

The tale of India's ruination is not complete without reference to the liabilities incurred in her name. Sufficient has been recently said about these in the public Press. It must be the duty of a Free India to subject all the liabilities to the strictest investigation, and repudiate those that may be adjudged by impartial tribunal to be unjust and unfair.

The inquities sampled above are maintained in order to carry on a foreign administration, demonstrably the most expensive in the world. Take your own salary. It is over Rs. 21,000 per month, besides many indirect additions. The British Prime Minister gets £ 5000 per year i, e. over Rs. 5400 per month at the present rate of exchange. You are getting over Rs. 700 per day, against India's average income of less than 2 annas per day. The British Prime Minister gets Rs. 180 per day against Great Britain's average income of nearly Rs.

2 per day. Thus, you are getting much over 5000 times India's average income. The British Prime Minister is getting only ninety times Britain's average income. On bended knee I ask you to ponder over this phenomenon. I have undertaken a personal illustration to drive home a painful truth. I have too great a regard for you as man to wish to hurt your feelings. I know that you do not need the salary you get. Probably the whole of your salary goes for charity, but a system that provides for such an arrangement deserves to be summarily scrapped. What is true of the Viceregal salary is true generally of the whole administration.

A radical cutting down of the revenue, therefore, depends upon an equally radical reduction in the expenses of the administration. This means a transformation of the scheme of Government. This transformation is impossible without independence. Hence, in my opinion, the spontaneous demonstration of 26th January, in which hundreds of thousands of villagers instinctively participated. To them independence means deliverance from the killing weight.

Not one of the great British political Parties, it seems to me, is prepared to give up the Indian spoils to which Great Britain helps herself from day to day, often in spite of the unanimous opposition of Indian opinion.

Nevertheless, if India is to live as a Nation, if the slow death by starvation of her people is to stop, some remedy must be found for immediate relief. The proposed Conference is certainly not the remedy. It is not a matter of carrying conviction by argument. The matter resolves itself into one of matching forces. Conviction or no conviction, Great Britain would defend her Indian commerce and interest by all the for-

ces at her command. India must cosequently evolve force enough to free herself from that embrace of death.

It is common cause that, however disorganised, and, for the time being, insignificant it may be the party of violence is gaining ground and making itself felt. Its end is the same as mine. But I am convinced that it cannot bring the desired relief to the dumb millions. And the conviction is growing deeper and deeper in me that nothing but unadulterated non violence can check the organised violence of the British Government. My experience, limited though it undoubtedly is, shows that non-violence can be an intensely active force. It is my purpose to set in motion that force, as well against the organised violent force of the British rule as the unorganised violent force of the growing party of violence. To sit still would be to give reign to both the forces above-mentioned. Having and immovable faith in the efficacy of non-violence, as I know it, it would be sinful on my part to wait any longer.

The non-violence would be expressed through Civil Disobedience, for the moment confined to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram but ultimately designed to cover all those who choose to join the movement with its obvious limitations.

I know that in embarking on non-violence, I shall be running what might fairly be termed a mad risk. But the victories of truth have never been one without risk, often of the bravest character. Conversion of a Nation that has consciously or unconsciously preyed upon another far more numerous, far more ancient and no less cultured than itself, is worth any amount of risk.

I have deliberately used the word 'conversion'. For my ambition is no less than to convert the British people, through non-violence, and thus make them see the wrong they have

done to India. I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve them, even as a I want to serve my own. I beleive that I have always served them. I served them up to 1919 blindly. But when my eyes were opened and I conceived Non-co-operation, the object still was to serve them. I employed the same weapon that I have, in all humility, successfully used against the dearest members of my family. If I have equal love for your people with mine, it will not long remain hidden. It will be acknowledged by them, even as the members of my family acknowledged it after they had tried me for several years. If the people will join me, as I expect they will, the suffering they will undergo unless the British Nation sooner replaces its steps will be enough to melt the stoniest hearts.

The plan through Civil Disobedience will be to combat such evils as I have sampled out. If we want to sever the British connection, it is because of such evils. When they are removed, the path becomes easy. Then the way to friendly negotiations will be open. If the British commerce with India is purified of greed, you will have no difficulty in recognising our Independence. I respectfully invite you to pave the way for an immediate removal of those evils, and thus open the way for a real conference between equals, interested only in promoting the common good of mankind through voluntary fellowship and in arranging terms of mutual help and commerce equally suited to both. You have unnecessarily laid stress upon the communal problems that unhappilly affect this land. Important though they undoubtedly are for the consideration of any scheme of Government, they have little bearing on the great problems which are above communities and which affect them all equally. But if you cannot see your way to deal with these

evils and my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on 11th day of this month, I shall proceed, with such co-workers of the Ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the Salt Laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the Independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil. The wonder is that we have submitted to the cruel monopoly for so long. It is, I know, open to you to frustrate my design by arresting me. I hope that there will be tens of thousands ready, in a disciplined manner, to take up the work after me, and, in the act of disobeying the Salt Act, to lay themselves open to the penalties of a Law that should never have disfigured the Statute Book.

I have no desire to cause you unnecessary embarrassment, or any at all, so far as I can help. If you think that there is any substance in my letter, and if you will care to discuss matters with me, and if to that end you would like me to postpone the publication of this letter, I shall gladly refrain, on receipt of a telegram to that effect soon after this reaches you. You will, however, do me the favour not to deflect me from my course, unless you can see your way to conform to the substance of this letter.

This letter is not in any way intended as a threat but is a simple and sacred duty peremptory on a civil resister, Therefore, I am having it specially delivered by a young English frind who believes in the Indian cause and is a full believer in non-violence, and whom Providence seems to have sent to me, as it were, for the very purpose.

I remain,
Your sincere friend.
M. K, Gandhi.

This strong exposition of the Indian cause and the fervent appeal contained in it evoked no response from the Viceroy who declared that the course Gandhiji contemplated to follow would involve violation of law and danger to public peace. Gandhiji, therefore, was disappointed and remarked that "on bended knees I asked for bread and received a stone instead. The English Nation responds only to force and I am not surprised by the Viceregal reply. The only public peace the nation knows is the peace of the public prison. India is a vast prison house. I repudiate this (British) Law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of compulsory peace that is chocking the heart of the Nation for want of free vent."

The campaign of Civil Disobedience now became a certainty. Gandhiji's plan was to undertake a march of 200 miles from his Sabarmati Ashram to the sea-side village of Dandi and there to break the law regarding Salt tax. Vallabhbhai Patel was arrested in the first week of March 1930 and sentenced to three months imprisonment. His conviction was a forerunner of things to come. Many village officers in Gujrat had already resigned their posts and the people were ready to follow the example set forth by Vallabhbhai. Gandhiji had chosen to break the law relating to Salt tax because to him it was the most obnoxious one. Salt is a necessity of daily life. Cattle also require it and it is also used for agricultural purposes. And because it is so essential for life, nature has made ample provision for it like air and water. In no other country do we find a parallel for this tax. Duty on such a free gift of nature was intentional and betrayed partiality towards British interest at the expense of the Indian consumer. The Salt Commission which was appointed in 1836 had recommended that duty

on salt should be levied in order that English salt be enabled to sell in India. Indian export trade was always carried on by the English shipping companies and the export trade being in excess of the import trade the English shipping companies had to provide for requisite ships to carry goods from Indian ports to their foreign destination and therefore they had to send ships from England to India. These ships were not always necessarily laden with sufficient cargo to supply keel ballast to enable them to sail on high seas. Therefore they used common salt for the purpose and as the English commercial genious would try to make money out of it, the English Government imposed duty on the Indian salt and made it dearer than the English variety. The Congress had been protesting against this duty on indigenous salt since its very beginning. But the Government would not consider taking any step which would be disadvantageous to the British interest.

Gandhiji was bent upon securing the right of free manufacture of salt. So he decided to undertake his famous march to Dandi and started on March 12, 1930 with some inmates of his Ashram. His Dandi march was a great historical event not only in the annals of Indian but also of world history and will be recorded as such. P. C. Ray described it in these terms: "Mahatma Gandhi's historic march was like the exodus of the Israelites under Moses. Until the Seer seized the promised land, he won't turn his back." This march was undertaken as a result of failure of the method of persuasion and negotiation to attain the goal of Indian Independence. The tyranny of the Government would not yield to force of argument. History of all the governments exhibits utter lack of capacity to recognise

any other force except the force of arms. Governments yield only when they are matched with superior brutal force and superior violence. But peculier circumstances in India totally prohibited the use of brutal force or violence in bringing pressure upon Government and securing the redress of people's grievances. The whole nation had been unarmed and therefore emasciated. It had meekly submitted to an alien rule that had been the cause of its total ruination—physical, moral, and spiritual. The whole nation had stumbled into the deep abyss of darkness and despair as never before in its history. This meek subjection of a nation of centuries of noble traditions—its abject misery—was calling forth for superhuman efforts; and the one man who could instil a new spirit in the Nation's body politic and dispel the dark clouds of despair was Gandhiji—the prophet and preacher of truth and non-violence. The spiritual traditions of this ancient land were symbolised in the unique personality of Gandhiji. The National spirit of India was manifest in the teachings of her noble seers. The burden of this teaching was ultimate victory of soul-force over brute-force, non-violence over violence, truth over untruth, light over darkness. To Gandhiji, India's salvation—India's recovery of her national spirit and honour—lay in imbibing the spirit of this teaching. Force always begets force and even if it triumphs momentarily still it does not succeed for ever. The vanquished hate the conquerer and always try to seek an opportunity to develop a sperior type of brutal force to match the one of the conquerer. The victory of non-violence is a perfect victory as it conquers the heart—as it convinces one of the error that one has committed through use of force—as it ultimately brings about a happy unity between the two opposites. This unity is the result of

sufferings one has undergone for the sake of one's own convictions for truth that is eternal.

Gandhiji aimed at such unity between England and India. He looked ahead for such a change of heart on the part of England. The English represented a tyrannic form of government. They represented forces of violence and untruth and darkness. In causing degradation of another country, England was herself being degraded spiritually. Gandhiji bore no feelings of hatred or ill-will or malice towards the English as a people–indeed towards none on the surface of this earth. But the absence of any feelings of hatred was no reason why he should meekly submit or allow his country to do so to a viscious system of government which was responsible for the manifold downfall of an ancient country like India. He would not allow his countrymen to submit to brutal force any longer and held a lofty ideal before them, pointing out the noble path to attain that ideal. His country unhesitatingly accepted his leadership, his ideal and his path.

After 24 days of march he reached the sea-side village of Dandi in the Surat district and there along with his followers he broke the law relating to the Salt tax by picking up a handful of salt from the Government depot. He had asked his followers all over the country to observe perfect non-violence in case of his arrest. After waiting for a period he intimated the Viceroy of his intention to 'raid' the salt depot at Dharasana. Consequently he was arrested on the morning of May 4,1930 and taken to the Yervda Prison. Gandhiji's arrest provoked world-wide reactions. Indians inhabiting distant parts of the word observed complete hartal. In Panama a twentyfour hour sympathetic hartal was observed

by the Indian business community. The French papers also prominently flashed the news of Gandhiji's arrest. From America a message was sent to the English Prime Minister Mr. Ramsay MacDonald by some American clergymen urging upon him the necessity of arriving at an amicable settlement with Gandhiji and the Congress. After Gandhiji's arrest the Working Committee of the Congress met in May at Allahabad and took a review of Indian political situation. The Committee by its resolution expanded the scope of Civil Disobedience and urged upon the people to start the 'No-tax campaign' 'violation of Forest Laws,' 'boycott of foreign cloth', 'picketing of liquor shops' etc. Its resolution inter alia states :

"7. The Committee is of the opinion that the time has arrived for the inauguration of the no-tax campaign by non-payment of special taxes in certain Provinces, and that a beginning should be made by non-payment of the land-tax in the Provinces where the Ryotwari System prevails, such as Gujrat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra, Tamil Nad, and the Punjab, and the non-payment of the Chowkidari-tax in Provinces like Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It calls upon such provinces to organise campaigns of non-payment of the land-tax or chowkidari-tax in areas selected by the Provincial Congress Committee.

"9. The Committee approves and confirms the action of the Acting President in permitting the breach of forest laws in the C.P. and resolves that in other Provinces similar laws in force may be breached after the sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee.

"11. Regarding the boycott of British goods it urges the people to make earnest attempts to bring about an effective boycott thereof at an early date."

The Viceroy issued ordinances, prohibiting picketing, preaching of non-payment of taxes, social boycott, and also a special Press ordinance. The Government used all forces at its command to suppress the country-wide movement of Civil Disobedience. A wave of great enthusiam spread over the whole country and even distant villages were affected by it. Salt raids at various Government Salt depots were organised and the Government resorted to lathi charges, firings, and severe beatings. Any attempt by volunteers to pick up a handful of salt was most brutally dealt with by Government. Firing by the police and military took place in various parts of the country, resulting in several deaths. In Peshawar, the police resorted to unprovoked firing. The Pathans of the Frontier Province were well disciplined under the able leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, the "Forntier Gandhi." He had organised a volunteer corps called the "Red Shirts." The Pathans usually are a violent people but Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan had imbibed in them a spirit of perfect non-violence and the Pathans displayed a sigular sense of discipline, remaining calm under severe provocations. Firings, lathi charges, arrests and imprisonment were the usual occurrences all over the country and all the prominent Congress leaders were put under arrest.

Mr. George Slocombe, a representative of the Daily Herald, was an eye-witness at one of the Salt raids at Wadala. In describing the raid to his paper, he obeserved," I watched the events from an observation-post from one of the rocky hills which ring in Wadala. It was humiliating for an Englishman to stand among the ardent, friendly, but deeply moved crowd of volunteers and sympathisers and watch the representatives of the country's administration engaged in

this ludicrous and embarassing business." He made an attempt to bring about a settlement between the Congress and the Viceroy and declared that if a sincere attempt were made to arrive at a settlement then it was possible that the Congress would withdraw the campaign of mass civil disobedience. He interviewed Gandhiji on May 20, 1930 at Yeravda and discussed with him the points relating to a compromise formula. The terms which he obtained from Gandhiji were as follows:-

1. The terms of reference of the Round Table Conference to include the framing of a constitution giving India the substance of independence.

2. Satisfaction to be granted to Mr. Gandhi's demand for the repeal of the Salt Tax, prohibition of liquor and the ban on foreign cloth.

3. An amnesty for prisoners convicted of political offences, to coincide with the end of the Civil Disobedience campaign.

4. The remaining seven points raised in Mr. Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy to be left for future discussion.

Mr. George Slocombe was hopeful of a settlement between the Congress and the Government. "Negotiation is still possible," he said, "and after two meetings with Mr. Gandhi in prison, I am convinced that conciliation will be met with conciliation, but that violence on either side will not compel surrender of the other. Incalculable disaster may yet be avoided by the frank recognition that the imprisoned Mahatma now incarnates the very soul of India."

Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar had interviews with the Viceroy and Gandhiji. They entered into elaborate correspondence regarding terms of settlement with both the Congress and the Government. But their good offices were destined to fail and the movement was not withdrawn by the Congress and the Government, too, withdrew none of its new ordinances giving extra-ordinary powers to the Executives or desisted from a policy of ruthless suppression. In Peshawar the military opened fire on peaceful crowds. The Government had brought Gharvali troops to open fire on the people. However, they refused to open fire on an unarmed people and as a consequence of their refusal they were arrested and awarded severe sentences. Along with the policy of repression the Government was also pursuing a face-saving policy of conciliation. According to the previous programme out-lined by the British Government the first Round Table Conference was held in London. It met on November 12, 1930 and consisted of 86 delegates drawn from various Parties except the Congress. Its composition was as follows:-

1. British Indian representatives	57
2. Indian States	16
3. British Political Parties	13
Total	86

In the deliberations at the Conference the Government agreed that the future Legislature should be constituted on a federal basis and Indian States and Provinces should be represented in it. Defence and External Affairs were to be reserved and the Governor-General was to be invested with special rights to carry on special responsibilities, to maintain

"the tranquility of State and secure its financial stability." The Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, out-lined the policy of the British Government in regard to the future consititution of India as follows:—

> "The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon the Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provision as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by the minorities to protect their political liberties and rights.
>
> "In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period, it will be the primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and exercised as not to prejudice the advance of India through the new constitution to full responsibility for her own Government."

The Prime Minister also expressed the hope that the services of the Congress representatives might also be enlisted in the framing of the future consitution for India, if it favourably responded to the Viceroy's appeal.

In the meanwhile, the Congress Working Committee on January 21,1931 expressed its opinion that the Congress was unable to recommend the change in its policy in response to the Premir's speech as given above because the Working Committee was of the opinion that the policy outlined in it was "too vague and general to justify any change in the policy of the Congress." Dr. Jayakar and Dr. Sapru, however, cabled from London to the Working Committee not to make public their reaction to the Premier's speech unless they had a meeting

with them. The Viceroy as a gesture of reconciliation issued the following statement : -

"In order to provide opportunity for consideration of the Statement made by the Prime Minister on the 19th January, my Government, in consultation with Local Governments, have thought it right that members of the Working Committee of the All-India Congress should enjoy full liberty of discussion between themselves and with those who have acted as members of the Committee since 1st January, 1930.

"In accordance with this decision and with this object, and in order that there may be no legal bar to any meeting they may wish to hold, the notification declaring the Committee to be an unlawful Association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act will be withdrawn by all Local Governments and action will be taken for the release of Mr. Gandhi and others.....

"My Government will impose no condition on these releases, because we feel that the best hope of peaceful condition lies in discussions being conducted by those concerned under terms of unconditional liberty. Our action has been taken in pursuance of a sincere desire to assist the creation of such peaceful conditions as would enable the Government to implement the undertaking given by the Prime Minister that if civil quiet were proclaimed and assured the Government would not be backward in response

"I am content to trust those who will be affected by our decision to act in the same spirit as inspires it. And I am confident that they will recognise the importance of securing for those grave issues a calm and dispassionate examination."

Accordingly Mahatma Gandhi and all the members of the Working Committee were released. Pandit Motilal

Nehru, the Congress President, was already released before the completion of his term of imprisonment because of his severe illnes to which he finally succumbed. His last words were : "Decide India's fate in the Swaraj Bhawan; decide it in my presence; let me be a party to the final honourble settlement of the fate of my Motherland. Let me die, if die I must, in the lap of a Free India. Let me sleep my last sleep, not in a subject country, but in a free one." Gandhiji on his death pathetically remarked "My position is worse than a widow's. By a faithful life she can apropriate the merit of her husband ; I can appropriate nothing. What I have lost to Motilalji's is a loss for ever. 'Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.'"

In the meanwhile, the Indian members of the R.T.C., had returned to India and on the 6th Feb. 1931 they issued the following appeal to the Congress :—

> The Scheme (as explained in the Premier's speech) represents a bare outline: the details—some of which are of substantial and far reaching character—have yet to be worked out. We earnestly hope that the leaders of the Congress and of other parties will now come forward to make solid contribution to the completion of the Scheme. It is our hope that an atmosphere of complete peace will be created for the consideration of these questions of high import and that the release of other political prisoners who have suffered incarceration for their conviction will follow."

In accordance with the appeal made by delegates to the R.T.C. and in response to the Government's conciliatory gesture Mahatma Gandhi wrote a letter to the Viceroy and sought an interview with him to discuss the terms of settlement.

Accordingly he was granted an interview on 17th February, 1931. All the members of the Congress Working Committee also hurried to Delhi and waited for the result of the interview. The discussions between Gandhiji and the Viceroy were carried on for days together. The Viceroy had to consult the British Government with regard to the matters under discussion and secure their consent before final settlement was arrived at. Ultimately after a lengthy period of prolonged discussions an agreement was reached between the Government and the Congress. This agreement is known as the 'Gandhi-Irwin Pact' and it conceded some of the demands for which the Congress had launched the campaign of Civil Disobedience. Some of these were as stated below :—

"As regards constitutional questions the scope of future discussion is stated, with the assent of His Majesty's Govt., to be with the object of considering further the scheme for the constitutional government of India discussed at the R. T. C. Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part. So also are Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interest of India for such matters, as, for instance, Defence, External Affairs, the position of Minorities, the financial credit of India and the discharge of obligations.

Government approve of the encouragement of Indian industries as part of economic and industrial movement designed to improve the material condition of India. And they have no desire to discourage methods of propaganda, persuasion or advertisement....

Ordinances promulgated in connection with the C. D. will be will be withdrawn——.

Pending prosecutions will be withdrawn if they have been filed in connection with the C. D. Movement and relate to offences which do not involve violence.——

Prosecutions, if any, against soldiers and Police involving disobedience of order will not come within the scope of this provision.

Those prisoners will be released who are undergoing imprisonment in connection with the C. D. Movement for offences which did not involve violence ——

This pact was signed on March 5, 1931, and a truce was declared between the Government and the Congress. The Congress withdrew its campaign of C. D. and the Government released the political prisoners undergoing imprisonment for various terms. By the end of March, the Congress held its Session at Karachi. The people were enthusiastic as they interpreted the Gandhi-Irwin pact as a victory of the people in their fight against the Government. But a gloomy atmosphere pervaded all over the country when it became known that Bhagat Singh and his two comrades were executed despite all the passionate appeal by Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders. In fact Mahatma Gandhi's own following held hostile demonstrations when he came to Karachi to attend the session. The youth of the country began to entertain feelings of hostility towards the elder leaders of the Congress. Under such gloomy atmosphere the Congress held its session and gave its assent to the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It passed many important resolutions on Fundamental Rights, and the policy of the Congress towards country's economic problems. This resolution is an outstanding one in so far as the Congress had definitely committed itself to a certain well-defined policy with regard to Indian labour, agriculture and other economic problems. The Resolution was as follows :—

"This Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what 'Swaraj' as conceived by the Congress will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress, therefore, declares that any Constitution which may be agreed to on its behalf should provide, or enable the 'Swaraj-Government' to provide for the following:

1) 1 Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the rights of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, for purposes not opposed to law or morality.

2 Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality.

3 The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected.

4 All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of caste, creed or sex.

5 No disability attaches to any citizen, by reason of his or her, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.

6 All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of State or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.

7 Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms, in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf.

8 No person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered or confiscated, save in accordance with law.

9 The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions.

10 The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

11 The State shall provide for free and compulsory primary education.

12 The State shall confer no titles.

13 There shall be no capital punishment.

14 Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling, and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

LABOUR.

2) a The organisation of economic life must conform to the principle of justice, to the end that it may secure a decent standard of living.

b The State shall safeguard the interests of the industrial workers and shall secure for them, by suitable legislation and in other ways, a living wage, healthy conditions of work, limited hours of labour, suitable machinery for the settlements of disputes between employers and the

workers, and protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.

3 Labour to be freed from serfdom and conditions bordering on serfdom.

4 Protection of women workers, and specially, adequate provision for leave during maternity period.

5 Children of school-going age shall not be employed in mines and factories.

6 Peasants and workers shall have the right to form Unions to protect their interests.

TAXATION AND EXPENDITURE

7 The system of land tenure and revenue and rent shall be reformed and an equitable adjustment made of the burden on agricultural land, immediately giving relief to the small peasantry by a subtantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them, and in case of uneconomic holdings, exempting them from rent, so long as necessary, with such relief as may be just and necessary, to holders of small estates by such exemption or reduction in rent, and to the same end, imposing a graded tax on net income from land above a reasonable minimum.

8 Death duties on a graduated scale shall be levied on property above a fixed minimum.

9 There shall be a drastic reduction of Military expenditure so as to bring it down to at least one-half of the presen scale.

10 Expenditure and salaries in civil departments shall be largely reduced No servant of the State, other than

specially employed experts and the like, shall be paid above a certain fixed figure, which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500 per month,

11 No duty shall be levied on salt manufactured in India.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMME.

12 The state shall protect indigenous cloth: and for this purpose pursue the policy of exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the cuntry and adopt such other measures as may be found necessary. The State shall also protect other indigenous industries, when necessary, against foreign competition.

13 Intoxicating drinks and drugs shall be totally prohibited except for medicinal purposes.

14 Currency and exchange shall be regulated in the national interest.

15 The State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport.

16 Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury direct and indirect.

17 The State shall provide for the Military training of citizens so as to organise a means of National defence apart from the regular Military forces.

The Karachi Congress was held in an atmosphere of hope as well as despair. After a year of struggle the Nation was justified in having a breathing time which the Gandhi–Irwin Pact gave it. But the communal tension was growing in the country and it was the firm conviction of Mahatma Gandhi that without securing communal agreement in India it would be sheer waste of time and energy to go to

England to attend the session of R. T. C. But in June, 1931 the Congress Working Committee apointed him its sole representative and expected him to attend that Conference even if previous communal settlement was not forthcoming in India. Besides the communal tension, the political atmosphere was also getting deteriorated. The Pact had provided for elementary rights such as peaceful picketing, preaching of boycott of foreign goods etc. But various local authorities were interfering in the exercise of such rights by Congressmen and the Congress. Working Committee was receiving complaints of breach of the Pact by local authorities. Lord Irwin had left India on 18th April and he was succeeded by Lord Willingdon. It was suspected that the spirit of conciliation which had inspired Lord Irwin was lacking in his successor and that he was not much enthusiastic about observing the terms of peace concluded as between equals between his predecessor and Gandhiji. Prohibitory orders, arrests, prosecutions and convictions were again the order of the day. The Working Committee on its part was keen on observing truce conditions and had issued instructions to Congressmen all over the country not to launch any aggressive type of civil disobedience or do anything that would constitute breach of the Pact. Mahatma Gandhi communicated to the Viceroy all the complaints he received against local governments; but the latter either pleaded inability to interfere in decisions of Local Governments or upheld them. This continuance of the breach of the pact could no longer be tolerated and Gandhiji informed the Viceroy that if things were going to happen as they did he would not be able to proceed to London to attend the second R.T.C. There was yet another irritant which influenced Gandhiji in taking this decision. Lord Irwin had promised Gandhiji that Dr. Ansari

would be nominated to the R.T.C.; but Lord Willingdon refused to include him in the list of delegates to the Conference on the plea that his nomination was opposed by other Muslim delegates. Dr. Ansari was a Congressite and a strong nationalist by faith and therefore he would have been of great help to Gandhiji in bringing about unity between Hindus and Muslims at the Conference. It seemed, however, that for that very reason, the Viceroy refused to nominate him. Consequently on August 13, 1931 Gandhiji made it known to the Viceroy that he would not attend the Conference whereupon a hasty correspondance followed between him and the latter and subsequently an interview was arranged between the two at Simla. At the last moment all the differences were smoothed out and ultimately Gandhiji left for London on 29th August, 1931 to attend the Conference.

At the R.T.C. Gandhiji expressed his own personal views as well as those of the Congress on all matters under discussion relating to the future contitutional structure of India. He claimed the right to speak in the name of the dumb and starving and illiterate Indians inhabiting some six lac odd villages in India and in this task and he was assisted by Sarojini Naidu and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the deleberations at the Conference. All other delegates, Gandhiji maintained, represented only sectional interests. After prolonged discussion on the various aspects of the future constution of India the Conference ended on December 1, 1931 without achieving substatial results.

While these deliberations were being conducted in London with a view to hammer out a constitution that would satisfy the major Indian parties, the political atmosphere in India was becoming gloomier and desperate. The

Government was pursuing a repressive policy and the situation in U. P., Bengal, and Frontier was causing alarm. Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on his way to Bombay to meet Gandhiji on his return from England. After a series of telegrams between Gandhiji and the Viceroy, hostilities were opened once again and the Congress with a renewed vigour flung itself whole-heartedly into the struggle. A repetition of events of 1930-31 followed everywhere-only the struggle was more intense and repression more severe.

There were other developments taking place that were destined to change the course of events in India.

On 17th August, 1931, Ramsay MocDonald announced the Award known as the 'Communal Award' which granted separate electorates to the Depressed Classes, thus alienating them from the Hindus. Gandhiji condemned this seperation and declared that he would resist the dismemberment of the Hindu community with his life and accordingly declared to undertake a fast unto death unless the Award was changed to his satisfaction. The fast was to begin on 20th September 1932. A cold shiver passed all over the country when the fast duly commenced on the declared day. The Premier declared that if there was an agreement between all Hindu leaders including Depressed Class leaders he would have no objection in changing the Award in accordance with the agreement arrived at between the leaders. A conference of leaders was convened by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and after a series of discussions and interviews with Gandhiji at Yeravda a compromise formula was evolved which granted reserved seats to the Depressed Classes but scrapped the separate electorates granted to them by the Premier's Award. The attention of the whole country was thence forward

shifted from political sphere and centred round the Depressed Classes' uplift. Gandhiji started the publication of a weekly called Harijan—a substitute name coined by Gandhiji for the Depressed Classes. After a period, he undertook another capacity fast of twenty-one days and the Government thereupon released him. After his release and conclusion of the fast he toured the whole country on a whirlwind campaign for the uplift of Harijans.

The next few years of the decade witnessed a period of drift and demoralisation in the Indian politics. The Civil Disobedience campaign launched with an intensity, previously unknown, frittered away. By the resolution of the Congress Working Committee which met in Poona in 1933 the mass-campaign was withdrawn and was substituted by individual civil disobedience. The party favouring Council-entry was clamouring for permission to contest the elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Congress could no longer resist their pressure or disregard their views. Even Mahatma Gandhi had to admit that "Parliamentary mentality has come to stay". Ultimately the Congress permitted the members of the Nationalist Party to contest elections and later on even put up its own candidates. The Congress nominees were returned to the Central Legislative Assembly with an overwhelming majority. For a period Gandhiji dissociated himself from taking any active part in politics and devoted himself heart and soul to the cause of Harijans and the constructive programme of the Congress.

In the meanwhile, the British Parliament was hammering out a new Legislation relating to India's future Constitution and in 1935 it passed the "Government of India Act, 1935." The Act granted Provincial Autonomy but reserved powers of Veto and Certification for Provincial Governors. Under

abnormal circumstances the Governors were also given powers to suspend the whole constitution. Those special provisions in the Act rendered the new constitution undemocratic and Contrary to the principle of "the government of the people, by the people and for the people."

The second part of the Act dealt with the Federal Scheme envisaging a federal central Government in which Provinces and Indian States were to be represented. Neither the Congress nor the Muslim League approved of this Act. But the Congress in 1936 decided to take part in Provincial elections with a purpose to wreck the constitution. These elections were held in the earlier part of 1937 and Congress candidates were returned with an overwhelming majority in six out of eleven Provinces in India. This was clearly indicative of the fact that it was Congress and Congress alone which had the confidence of the general electorate. For about a period of six months the Congress refused to form Provincial Ministries in Provinces where it formed majority unless the Provincial Governors gave the requisite assurance that they would not interfere in the day to day administrative work of the Ministry. However, the Viceroy declared in June 1937 that it was never the intention of the framers of the Act that special powers invested in the provincial governors were to be utilised for interference in the day to day administrative work of the ministries and that the governors were generally expected to abide by the decisions of their Cabinet Ministers. On this assurance from the Viceroy, the Congress formed Ministries in six Provinces viz. Madras, Bombay, C. P., U. P., Bihar, and Orissa; and later on in Assam and N. W. F. P.

These Ministries were in office for a period of two years till the declaration of World War II. When on 3rd

September, 1939 the Viceroy declared India a belligerent country without consulting either popular provincial ministries or party leaders in India the Congress held it to be an encroachment on Provincial autonomy and contravention of the principle of self-determination and instructed all the Ministries affiliated to it to resign forthwith. These resignations brought to an end the two year old experiment in working the provincial autonomy and exposed to the full the undemocratic character of the 1935 constiution.

CHAPTER. 4.

INDIA AND WORLD WAR II.

On 3rd September, 1939 England declared herself at war with Nazi Germany. On the same day Lord Linlithgow, then the Viceroy of India, declared India a belligerent country; but there was a world of difference between these two apparently similar declarations. The former declaration had the assent of the English people as expressed through their representatives in the Parliament while in the latter case not even the formality of consulting India's Central Legislature (containing not a small proportion of official and nominated members on whom the Government could generally rely for support) was observed. At that time popular Ministries were functioning in all the eleven provinces of India and eight of them owed allegience to the Congress which had long ago anticipated this war and formulated its own policy towards it. It had visualised such a war as a final clash between democracy and fascism and its sympathies always lay on the side of democracy and was prepared to fight for it provided in the interest of the democratic cause itself India was granted complete independence.

The Congress had previously protested against the use of Indian troops to suppress the rising freedom movements in other countries. Thus as long ago as 1927, the Congress had passed a resolution protesting against the despatch of Indian troops to Shanghai to suppress the Chinese Revolution. Indian troops were also sent to other countries such as Burma, Iran, Egypt etc. to guard British interests. They were used against the democratic upsurge of peoples in other

lands and the Indian National Congress had strongly condemned their use to deprive other peoples of their freedom. About the middle of 1939 it became known that the Government, of India had despatched Indian troops to other countries. The Government, in the normal course, should have taken the consent of the peoples' representatives in the Central Legislature; but the Government neither took the people's representatives in their confidence nor intimated them of their decision to send Indian troops abroad. There was a crisis looming large in Europe and it was feared that war with Germany was inevitable. The British Parliament was intending to take steps to amend the Government of India Act 1935 with a view to concentrate all executive power in the Central Government to enable it to override the decisions of Provincial Governments in the event of war. At that time the Congress Ministries that were functioning under the 1935 Act considered it a betrayal on the part of the Viceroy who had given a specific assurance that neither he himself nor the Provincial Governors would interfere in the normal working of the Provincial administration. This action on the part of the British Government at a period of crisis was resented by the Congress.

In declaring India a belligerent country the Government flouted the very basic principles of democracy. They neither consulted the Central Legislature nor the Provincial Governments. The British Government had declared that they were fighting for democracy but their actions belied their word for their agents in India were pursuing a full-fledged autocratic policy. Following the Viceregal declaration a number of ordinances were issued and the British Government passed the Government of India Amending Act. All these ordinances and legislations were a denial of democracy in its applica-

tion to India as these further curtailed and limited whatever powers were given to the Provincial Governments under the 1935 constitution. The Congress was placed in a dilemma. Its sympathies were with the victims of Nazi aggression and it very much wanted to render help as far as it possibly could without compromising its demand for Indian freedom. Earlier in August 1939 it had stated that, "In this world crisis the sympathies of the Working Committee are entirely with the peoples who stand for democracy and freedom and the Congress had repeatedly condemned fascist aggression in Europe, Africa, and the Far East of Asia, as well as the betrayal of democracy by British imperialism in Czechoslovakia and Spain." But it further stated, "The past policy of the British Government as well as recent developments demonstrated abundantly that this Government does not stand for freedom and democracy and may at any time betray these ideals. India cannot associate herself with such a Government or be asked to give her resources for democratic freedom which is denied to her and which is likely to be betrayed."

The Congress opposed the high-handed policy of the British Government in dealing with Indian democratic sentiments and in spite of its sympathies for the democratic cause it could not commit India, her man-power and material resources, in a war to which the previous consent of the people was not obtained. And this was not based simply on the formality of Government seeking peoples' approval for participation in the war. It was a very real issue with the Congress. There was the question of changing the whole psychology of the Indian people and their approach to the new international situation arising as a result of the war. Twenty-five years ago India was made

to contribute her man-power and resources to the war which ended in the aggrandisement of British Imperialism and the Indian people now could not be persuaded to side once again with the British Government unless they were made to feel that their participation was on a footing of equality and that all political power rested in the Indian hands. There was a strong feeling in the country that unless India's right to freedom was conceded the Congress should not participate in the war. The Congress Working Committee studied the whole situation and on 14th September, 1939 issued a statement in which it explained its position vis-a-vis the war crisis and asked the British Government to state their war aims. The statement was to the following effect:

"The people of India have, in the recent past, faced grave risks and willingly made great sacrifices to secure their own freedom and establish a free democratic state in India, and their sympathy is entirely on the side of democracy and freedom. But India cannot associate herself in war said to be for democratic freedom when that very freedom is denied to her, and such limited freedom as she posseses, is taken away from her.

"The Committee are aware the Governments of Great Britain and France have declared that they are fighting for democracy and freedom and to put an end to aggression. But the history of the recent past is full of examples showing the constant divergence between the spoken word, the ideals proclaimed, and the real motives and objectives. Again it is asserted that democracy is in danger and must be defended and with this

statement the Committee are in entire agreement. The Committee believe that the peoples of the West are moved by this ideal and objective and for these they are prepared to make sacrifices. But again and again the ideals and sentiments of the people and those who have sacrificed themselves in the struggle have been ignored and faith has not been kept with them.

If the war is to defend the status quo, imperialist possessions, vested interests and privileges, then India can have nothing to do with it. If, however, the issue is democracy and a world order based on democracy, then India is intensely interested in it. The Committee are convinced that the interests of Indian democracy do not conflict with the interests of British democracy or of world democracy. But there is an inherent and ineradicable conflict between democracy for India and elsewhere and imperialism. If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end imperialism in her own possessions..... A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilizing the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity." The Congress Working Committee further stated: "The crisis that has overtaken Europe is not of Europe only but of humanity and will not pass like other crises or wars leaving the essential structure of the present-day world intact. It is likely to refashion the world for good or ill, politically, socially and economically. This crisis is the inevitable consequence of the social and

political conflicts and contradictions which have grown alarmingly since the last Great war, and it will not be finally resolved till these conflicts and contradictions are removed and a new equilibrium established. That equilibrium can only be based on the ending of the domination and exploitation of one country by another, and on a reorganisation of economic relations on a juster basis for the common good of all. India has been the outstanding example of modern imperialism and no refashioning of the world can succeed which ignores this vital problem. With her vast resources she must play an important part in any scheme of world organisation. But she can only do so as a free nation whose energies have been released for this great end. Freedom today is indivisible and every attempt to retain imperialist domination in any part of the world will lead inevitably to fresh disaster."

The Committee at last invited the British Government "to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged, in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people? The real test of any declaration is its application in the present, for it is the present that will govern action today and will give shape to the future—it will be infinite tragedy if this war is carried on in the spirit of imperialism and for the purpose of retaining this structure which is itself the cause of war and human degradation."

The Indian people in general (and the Congress in particular) were very much eager to associate themselves

with the democratic cause all the world over. The Congress believed that the final destiny of humanity lay in the triumph of democracy over reactionary forces of fascism and that the problem of the freedom of India was linked up with that of other democratic countries of the world. Even when England and France were supplicating at the feet of Hitler and appeasing fascism Congress had been more emphatic in its condemnation of fascism and the appeasement policy of Western democracy. The British governing class throughout the period between two world wars was actuated by the desire to consolidate its far-flung Empire and protect its economic interests. Especially since Hitler's rise to power, it aimed at the creation of a strong bulwark in mid-Europe to halt the west ward expansion of Soviet Communism. For that purpose they followed a policy of appeasement of and indirect help to German Nazism and Italian Fascism. In the Far East when Japan -a member of the League of Nations- started a war of aggression in China the Western democracy impassively witnessed the unprovoked attack on the Chinese Republic. It was the first act of submission of democracy to Fascism. Mr. Amery, who later became Secretary of State for India, even defended the Japanese aggression in the House of Commons on the ground that if they condemned what Japan had done in China they would have to condemn what they themselves had done in India, Egypt and other parts of the Empire.

The imperialist appeasement of Fascism was inspired by the fear of Communism and when a choice was required to be made between Fascism and Communism, the former was looked upon with favour, fondled and nurtured. For it was more akin to imperialism; in fact it was the out-growth of imperialism more intense and more virulent. Basic foun-

dations of both were the same, viz. exploitation of one country by another and both tried to defend and preserve the old social and political structure which would make that exploitation possible. On the other hand, Communism was based on an entirely different ideology and envisaged a different and a totally new type of social structure in which older ideas of private property and exploitation in its variegated forms found no place. Clash between 'democratic' imperialism and fascism was to be avoided at any cost and so the mid-European fascism was to be lured into expansion eastwards and even the financial aid, as the popular rumour goes, to the extent of some million pounds was offered to it by the British governing classes. The British and the French Governments were passive witnesses of the Abyssinian tragedy followed in succession by the rise of Franco in Spain and the ultimate defeat and betrayal of the Spanish Republic, annexation of Austria and betrayal of Czechoslovakia.

All through this period which preceded World War II Congress policy has been one of undiluted opposition to fascist aggression everywhere. As a token of sympathy it had sent a Medical Unit to China to take care of the Chinese wounded. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru personally visited Republican Spain in the midst of the Spanish Civil War and conveyed to the Spanish people India's sympathies for Spanish Republican cause. When the British ruling class was following a policy of appeasement of fascism the Congress was vehemently championing the cause of democracy everywhere and emphatically opposing fascism.

Now, when the clash between democracy and fascism became inevitable the Congress found itself in an unenviable position. On the one hand, it could not render any effective

aid to the world democratic cause when democracy itself was denied to India; on the other hand, it could not be a passive spectator of the onslaught of fascism over democracy. India enslaved, the people would not have the emotional upsurge which was so much necessary to sacrifice their all to save democracy from utter defeat. And so the Congress in its desire to associate itself with the world effort of annihilating fascism, invited the British Government to state their war aims and how they would be applied to India in the immediate present. The response from the British Government was unsatisfactory and lacked the sincerity in which the appeal was made. They wanted India's co-operation and help in their war effort but that was not to be as between equals. The British Government was traditionally inert and could not readily grasp the situation in India. They were wanting in the psychological approach that was required to be made to change the whole mental outlook of suspicion of the Indian people towards Britain.

Under these circumstances it was difficult for the Congress Governments in the Provinces to function. The Government of India Act, 1935, was so amended on the outbreak of hostilities as to invest the Viceroy with powers of interference in the Provincial administration and thus whatever statutory powers these Governments were enjoying under that Act, were overridden by this new amendment. The Provincial popular Governments were to be mere instruments in the hands of the Governors in carrying out the instructions of the Central Government of India which was not responsible to the peoples' representatives. Under the guise of war emergency measures the Viceroy and his Executive Council became the supreme executive authority in the country. If the Provincial Governments were to

continue in office that would have meant submission to an authoritarian Central Executive. The Congress was unable to accept such an intolerable situation and therefore it advised its Ministries to resign and thus ended the much advertised Provincial Autonomy. Impartial foreign critics had also denounced the British Government's undemocratic action in declaring India a belligerent country without previously obtaining popular consent. Francis Williams in his 'Democracy's Last Battle' writes, "The consent of the 310,000,000 people of British India was neither sought nor obtained. They had no voice in the gravest decision that can be taken by a nation. They were at war whether they willed it or not. The fact that most of those able to speak for the people of India hate Nazism and would in fact at that time have been ready to support Britain in war against it makes no difference. They were not consulted. Any talk of a 'large measure of Indian self-government' became in face of that stupendous fact, a blatant hypocrasy which rightly damages our moral position in the world."

There was again a parting of ways and a prospect of conflict with the Government. The resignation of popular Ministries in any other democratic country would have precipitated a grave constitutional crisis; but in India the foreign autocrats almost expressed a sigh of relief at their resignation. They were imbued in their old imperialistic ideas and they viewed the war as something distant—away from India and not directly affecting them. To them it was being fought for the preservation of their Empire and their vested interests spread all over the world. They were blind to the changes that were taking place in the social structure everywhere in the world and therefore to them the return to the old autocratic

rule after the resignation of the Congress Ministries was home-coming.

The Congress now began to think in terms of non-co-operation but its allegiance to the cause of democracy prevented it from stretching its policy to the extent of causing embarrassment to the Government in their war effort. The turn the war was taking in Europe was causing wide-spread alarm. Poland, Denmark, Norway and the most important of all, France collapsed like a house of cards before the German war-machine. England herself was isolated and its cities and factories were put to severe bombardment during the German air blitz. The grimness of the war situation put a restraint on the more impatient groups within the Congress and to ease the matters and help restore the strained relations between it and the Government, the Congress made yet another effort on the initiative of Mr. C. Rajgopalachari. Previously the Congress had asked the British Government to state their war aims and how they would be applied to India. Now in view of the worsening war situation and the brave solitary fight that England carried on against the Hitlerite Germany and her satellites, the Congress in order to effectively help England in her war efforts, asked the British Government to recognise Indian independence and demaned the immediate formation of a national government at the Centre. The National Government would be formed of all important political parties in India. Rajaji explained his demand for the formation of the National Government and India's position vis-a-vis the European war situation in the following terms:—

> "...That if Britain acknowledged the right of India to the status of an independent nation and set up a truly National

Government composed of the various groups among the present elected Legislatures in the Central Assembly, the deadlock should stand resolved. It is wrong for the British to declare that the Indian people were in a state of war against any other nation without asking them about it. War does not mean only payment of some money and manufacturing munitions. It can easily lead up to all that is happening in London, and should be dealt with on that footing. Four hundred millions of human beings cannot be thrown into such a condition against their own will or without asking them. It is possible for us to recognise the justice of Britain's case against Germany without having to join in it and extend the tragedy beyond the necessary limits. America refuses to enter the war though it may give judgment in favour of Britain. We have not entered Sino-Japanese war inspite of the justice of China's cause."

The demand for the establishment of National Govt. in no way meant that the Congress fought all power to concentrate in its hands-even though such a claim to power would have been a justifiable and democratic one, considering that it was only the Congress that had the confidence of the large majority of Indian people.

The Viceroy would of course be there as the head of the Government; so also the Commander-in-chief under whom would be placed the whole of India's war-apparatus. Statutory and constitutional changes were of course not expected to take place immediately but if such a Government were formed and India's popular leaders participated in it, the Viceroy would have naturally to forego his right of veto. Once such a Government were established the Congress would be enabled to pull its full weight on the side of Great Britain in her great war effort. Such a full-fledged

participation in the war involved a break with Gandhiji's ideal of non-violence and its application in all spheres of life. In the peculiar circumstances of India, the Congress had adopted non-violence as a policy, while with Gandhiji it was an article of faith and he could not be expected to compromise it even for the victory of democracy over fascism. He had such an emphatic faith in the efficacy of non-violence, that he had gone even to the extent of appealing to the people of Great Britain to abandon all violent methods of fighting Germans and urging upon them to adopt his method of non-violent non-co-operation. Below we reproduce a part of his appeal.

TO EVERY BRITON.

"I appeal to every Briton, wherever he may by now, to accept the method of non-violence instead of that of war for the adjustment of relations between nations and other matters. Your statesmen have declared that this is a war on behalf of democracy. There are many other reasons given in justification. You know them all by heart. I suggest that at the end of war, whichever way it ends, there will be no democracy left to represent democracy. This war has decended upon mankind as a curse and a warning. It is a curse in as much as it is brutalising man on a scale hitherto unknown. All distinctions between combatants and non-combatants have been abolished. No one and nothing is to be spared. Lying has been reduced to an art. Britain was to defend small nationalities. One by one they have vanished—at least for the time being. It is also a warning. It is a warning that, if nobody reads the writing on the wall, man will be reduced to the state of the beast, whom he is shaming by his manners. I read the writings when the hostilities broke out, But I had not the courage to say the word. God has given me the courage to say it before it is too late.

"I appeal for cessation of hostilities not because you are too exhausted to fight, but because war is bad in essence. You want to kill Nazism. You will never kill it by its indifferent adoption. Your soldiers are doing the same work of destruction as the Germans. The only difference is that perhaps yours are not as thorough as the Germans. If that be so, yours will soon acquire the same thoroughness as theirs, if not much greater. On no other condition can you win the war. In other words you will have to be more ruthless than the Nazis. No cause, however just, can warrent the indiscriminate slaughter that is going on minute by minute. I suggest that a cause that demands the inhumanity that are perpetrated to-day cannot be called just.

I do not want Britain to be defeated, nor do I want her to be victorious in a trial of brute strength, whether expressed through the muscle or the brain. Your muscular bravery is an established fact. Need you demonstrate that your brain is also as unrivalled in destructive power as your muscle? I hope you do not wish to enter into such an undignified competition with the Nazis. I venture to present you with a nobler and braver way, worthy of bravest soldier. I want you to fight Nazism without arms, or, if I am to retain the military terminology with non-violent arms. I would like you to lay down the arms you have as being useless of saving you or humanity. You will invite Herr Hitler or Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these, but neither your souls nor your minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman, and child, to be slaughtered but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them."

Gandhiji, the apostle of truth and non-violence, who had gone to the extent of appealing Great Britain to lay down arms and adopt his methods of non-violence to resist the Nazis, could not permit the Congress to participate in a brutalizing war and harness India's man-power and material resources to the war effort. But the Congress itself was mainly a political organisation and viewed all things in the context of India's demand for freedom and was willing to pursue any policy that would finally achieve that goal. And so when the 'Rajgopalachari offer' came, in the wider interests of democracy and India's freedom, the Congress acquiesced in it. Gandhiji, however, dissociated himself from the Congress. To him the 'Rajgopalachari offer' was "a denial of the last twenty years' past of the Congress." His dissociation from the Congress was agonising to all concerned. However, Gandhiji could not but adhere to the principle of non-violence even in the face of gravest disaster. The Congress being principally a political organisation had to consider the problem of India's defence from purely a political point of view and therefore at Poona in 1940 it passed a resolution which embodied in it the Rajaji proposals. These proposals if accepted by the Government would have paved the path of co-operation for the Congress. The British Government's response to this offer, however, was unsatisfactory and even this conciliatory gesture from the Congress went unheeded by the die-hard British imperialists. This apathy of the British Government towards India's national aspirations was, in a way, very much alarming. If Britain could refuse a very modest demand made in the spirit of sympathy and co-operation, amidst a total war in which Britain was temporarily at disadvantage, what would be her attitude when the war was won and she was in

better position to dictate terms? Would India be forced to undergo the experience of the earlier two decades that intervened between two world wars? Was it not now incumbant on the Congress to prepare itself for some positive action in view of repeated refusals from the British Government to its offers of co-operation, even in spite of her policy of 'non-embarrassment' during the war period? The civil liberties of the people were being suppressed everywhere and the Government policy was reverting to the old type of repression. Restrictions were being imposed on the movements of political leaders, prosecutions were undertaken for even technical offences, and it generally appeared that the whole administrative machinery was being geared into readiness for any popular expression of country-wide resentment and frustration felt at the Government policy. The Congress, as a representative political organisation, could not tolerate the continuance of such a situation any longer and it was forced into decisive action which it attempted to avoid from the very beginning of the War. Under Gandhi's guidance, (whose advice it again sought) the Congress started a movement of individual civil disobedience. Certain qualifications were required to be fulfilled by the participants in the movement and their inclusion in the list of civil resisters was required to be recommended by Congress Committees and approved by Gandhiji. These persons would defy some formal order or ban and court imprisonment. In the beginning top-most leaders were chosen. These included members of the Congress Working Committee, ex-ministers of Provincial Governments, and members of provincial Legislatures. The voluntary participation of the elected representatives in the movement was intended to impress upon the Government that the electors in the country supported the Congress atti-

tude towards war and that the individual civil disobedience movement was started as a token protest against the Government's repressive policy and encroachment upon the civil liberties of the people. Generally speaking, the point at issue was the fundamental right of free speech and expression of one's views towards the war. Gandhiji asserted that the people must have such a right and precipitated a crisis on this issue alone on refusal from the Viceroy to concede this demand.

Gradually the lower rank and file of the Congress were permitted to take part in the movement after previous satisfaction of requisite conditions. The number of civil resisters swelled to about 30,000 and many more besides them were put behind the bar so that Indian resources could be exploited for war purposes at Government's own free will.

In Europe, the war entered into a new and different phase when Hitler marched his Nazi hordes into the Soviet territory in June 1941. So long war was, to an Indian nationalist, an imperialist war between two rival groups though one apparently proclaimed to fight for the preservation of democratic institutions. In the final analysis, however, the Indian nationalists could view it only as a war to preserve the old social structure in which the triumphant imperialists would exploit to the full the backward and oppressed peoples of the world. But India had sympathies for the Soviet experiment in the creation of a new social order in which exploitation in whatever form would find no place. Despite some abominable (from Indian point of view) aspects of the Soviet experiment, India especially advanced Indian nationalists, had looked forward to the adoption of the Soviet ideas of classless society and economic equality. But

the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union dealt a blow to all future hopes and it seemed as if the fate of the whole human civilization was dependent on the outcome of the war. India's voluntary participation became all the more urgent and it was thought that the fast changing developments in the war situation would compel the British Government to review its attitude towards nationalist India.

In December 1941 Japan entered the War on the side of the Axis and the chain of successes that nation achieved created a flutter in the nationalist camps. Japan dealt a deadly blow to the British prestige when her air force sank the two renowned British vessels; (The Prince of Wales and the Repulse) and in the Pacific pounded the defences at Pearl Harbour and precipitated the American entry into the War on the side of Great Britain and her Allies. The war now assumed a global character and to India it became an affair of personal interest and did not remain a war to be reviewed on theoretical propositions.

The Indian civil resisters were serving out their terms in the Indian prisons but the changed conditions in the international situation compelled the Government to adopt a new policy towards them and as they were gradually being released many prominent leaders came out of jail before they completed their respective terms. Jawaharlal Nehru was released on December 4, 1941, just three days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. The British Imperialist defence position in the Far East appeared to be a mere house of cards as they so easily surrendered to the Japanese pressure. The Japanese defeated the British forces in the Malayan Peninsula and occupied the whole of the territory. Singapur, that Eastern Gibralter and Gateway to the Far East, fell on

February 15, 1942 and Rangoon on March 7 and the war entered into the South Eastern and Southern provinces of Burma. These developments brought home to the Indians the reality of the war. The war situation in the East gave rise to a variety of feelings amongst Indians. China had held out for more than four years against Japan, though she was ill equipped and her forces lacked all types of modern armaments against the superior and well trained forces of Japan fully equipped with modern armament. India had sympathy for China and therefore the Congress always avoided to take any step that would hamper China's war effort or obstruct outside help reaching out to her. The only way by which help could reach her was the Burma road and it was at one time closed by the British themsleves in fear of causing provocation to Japan. Now the Japnese onward march in Burma threatened that road and it seemed almost certain that China would be isolated.

A year earlier, Subhash Chandra Bose, an ex-President of the Indian National Congress, had escaped to Germany and now he was on the side of the Axis, broadcasting to the Indian people to hamper the British War effort. He believed that India's liberation could be achieved by taking outside help and hampering the British war effort from within. He had, of course, no sympathy for the Fascist ideology but he saw India's liberation in the victory of the Axis over Great Britain and her Allies For that purpose Subhash Chandra Bose later on raised an Indian National Army which was joined by the Indian nationals living in Burma, Malaya, Singapore and other territories and Indian Army prisoners of war. He had potential followers even in India. The common man had no sympathies for the Axis but he was intensely interested

in the cause of India's freedom. He saw frustration in the policy the Governmedt was pursuing and he was despaired into passive jubilation at the Axis victory. This was an alarming development from the Congress point of view. Democracy was the life blood of the Congress and it could under no circmstances allow the Indian people to turn sympathatic towards the Axis indeologies. Moreover it had an immediate interest in the war. The Japaness armies were marching towards the Eastern boundaries of India. Japanese planes had bombed the ports of Calcutta and Vizagapattam. Even the Government became panicky and some part of the Madras Government Secretariat had been removed to a distant place. Indian evacuees from Burma had spread all sorts of rumours all over the country and these infiltrated to the distant villages in India. Even in the face of common danger, there was a policy of racial discrimination between the European and Indian evacuees from Burma. There were two roads at one point leading from Burma to India; the better one was reserved for the white evacuees. The plight of the Indian evacuees was heart-rending; many of them died on their way to India; hundreds had to go without food, clothing and other necessities. All this was going on inspite of an expanded Executive Council, containing a greater proportion of Indian members than there was before the war and no less a man than Mr. M. S. Aney, who was specially in charge of activities concerned with the evacuees from Burma. The sad plight of Indian refugees from Burma arose a country-wide resentment and helped the propagation of pro-Japanese feelings in India.

Indians, of course, never wished the replacement of the British rule by any other foreign rule. What they resented was the denial of opportunity to pull their weight on the

side of world democracies and the absence on the part of the bureaucracy to understand the reality of danger to which India was exposed. Yet, inspite of all the frustration and resentment and despair, the Congress organised Home Guards to fight panic in the country and called upon the people to non-co-operate with the enemy in case of invasion. India had before her the heroic example of China and the Soviet Union. The civilian population in the occupied zones in those countries had adopted guerilla methods of warfare and harassed the communication lines of the enemy. In India guerilla warefare was out of question as the people were never trained in methods of violent resistance nor were they allowed the use of arms even in the period of such a grave emergency. Yet the Congress did not ask the people to meekly submit to the invaders but called upon them to resist them, albeit non-violently, to the last drop of their blood. Pandit Nehru even declared that he would resist Japanese invasion even if headed by Subhash Chandra Bose. The Congress, time and again, was laying emphasis on the point that India's independence was intimately connected with the ultimate triumph of the Allies and therefore any foreign invasion to defeat the British on the Indian territory would lead only to the complication of the Indian situation as in the event of an invasion India's political destiny would be placed in the hands of the invading nation. That would mean a change of masters for India—a position which was most reprehensible to the Congress.

The British Government was aware of the Indian political situation and the very real danger of invasion to which India was exposed. Mr. Churchill, the British Prime Minister, announced in the House of Commons on March 11, 1942 that the British War Cabinet had come to certain agre-

ed conclusions with regard to India's future constitutioual development and that Sir Stafford Cripps would be sent out to India with definite proposals which he characterised as "a just and final solution." Sir Stafford Cripps was chosen because of his diplomatic suceess in Russia and his subsequent rise in the estimation of his countrymen. His socialistic inclinations were well-known. His visit to India with the British War Cabinet's agreed proposals was therefore agreable to the Indian nationalists and his arrival was even eagerly awaited. Cripps arrived in New Delhi on March 23 and during the first two days of his stay, he saw the Provincial governors and also aprised the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council of the proposals he had brought for the soultion of India's constitutional deadlock. Then he saw various pary leaders and particulaly invited Gandhiji to meet him. In a series of intervews he explained the implications of his proposals to all the party leaders and tried to impress upon them the desirability of accepting them in toto. The negotiations between him and Congress leaders proceeded in a friendly atmosphere and at one time it was almost considered that success was within sight.

The proposals dealt mainly with India's future constitutional problems. It was admitted in the proposals that it was India's own right to decide her future constitutional structure and if she elected to do so, she was even free to secede from the British Empire. A provision was made, after secession of hostilities to convene a Constituent Assembly which would frame India's constitution. All this seemed to please the sentiments of the Indian nationalists. But there were several drawbacks in the proposals. The right of secession from the Indian Union was granted to the Provinces if they considered the Union constitution to be unsati-

sfactory after it was framed. This was a blow to the deep-rooted-sentiments of the Indian nationalists with whom the indivisibility of India had been an article of faith. Secondly the States were also invited to take part in the Constituent Assembly, but no provision was made for the peoples of the State to elect their representatives to take part in the Union Constituent Assembly. The Indian States were merely invited to "appoint" representatives to the Constituent Assembly. Further, they had the liberty to join or not the Indian Union. Thus along with the acceptance of the Congress demand for the declaration of immediate independence for India and convening of Constituent Assembly for constitution-framing, there appeared the fearful prospect of scores of 'independent' States dotted all over the Indian Peninsula. There were also some Provinces who would take the advantage of the seceding clause in the Draft Declaration and assert their independence. The worst feature of the proposals was that the seceding parts of India, whether Provinces or Indian States, would leave the Union after having taken part in the deliberations of the Assembly, left their impress on the constitution framed; and the Union retaining no power in any way or form over them. This was a mockery of democracy and the principle of self-determination and constituted a bitter pill for the Congress to swallow. These provisions gave encouragement to the fissiparous tendencies that were already evident in India and yet Congress did not raise any major objections to them even though they were entirely in disagreement with its political idealogies.

The proposals were to be given effect to in the distant and vague future after the end of the war. But to the Congress, what mattered was the immediate present which would

give a shape to that future. It wanted transference of substantial power to Indian hands in the immediate present to effectively harness India's resources to the successful termination of the global war. India was the most important war base in the South-East war theatre. It was from this base, used as a spring-board, that the Allies would finally make decisive efforts to smash the Japanese militarism. The Congress recognised the importance of India as a potential war base and therefore demanded that political control in the Indian territory should rest with the elected representatives of the Indian people. From this point of view the Cripps proposals were extremely disappointing. The last clause in the Draft declaration related to the immediate present. 'The control and direction' of India's defence was to be the British responsibility. The Congress was agreeable to this but insisted on having an Indian Defence Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Congress Working Committee's resolution of April 21, 1942 on the subject stated: "At any time Defence is a vital subject; during wartime it is all important and covers almost every sphere of life and administration. To take away Defence from the sphere of responsibility at this stage is to reduce that responsibility to a farce and a nullity and to make it perfectly clear that India is not going to be free in any way and her Government is not going to function as free and independent government during the pendency of the war."

As a result of discussions that followed it was proposed on behalf of the British Government that the Commander-in-Chief should be retained in the Viceroy's Executive Council as "War Member" and he should have full control over the armed forces in India, subject, of course "to the con-

trol of His Majesty's Govt. and the War Cabinet upon which body a representative Indian should sit with equal powers in all matters relating to the Defence of India. Membership of a Pacific Council would, likewise, be offered to a representative Indian."

A representative Defence Member was also proposed to be taken in the Viceroy's Executive Council and a division of reponsibilities between him and the Commander-in-Chief was suggested. The Indian Defence Member's responsibilities were to be as follows :—

"(1) Matters now dealt with in the Defence Department which would be transferred to a Defence Co-ordination Department: (a) Public Relations. (b) Demobilisation and Post war Reconstruction. (c) Petrolium Officer whose functions are to calculate the requirements of, and make provision for, all the Petroleum Products required for the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and for the Civil Departments, including storage and distribution. (d) Indian representation on the Eastern Group supply Council. (e) Amenities for, and welfare of, troops and their dependents, including Indian soldiers abroad. (f) All canteen organisations. (g) Certain non-technical educational institutions, e. g. Lawrence Schools, K. G. R. I. M. Schools and the Prince of Wales' Royal Indian Military College. (h) Stationery, printing and forms for the Army. (i) Reception, accomodation and social arrangements for all foreign missions, representatives and officers.

"(2) In addition, the Defence Co-ordination Department would take over many major questions bearing directly on Defence, but difficult to locate in any particular existing Department. Examples are: 'Denial' policy: policy of evacuation from threatened areas: Signals Co-ordination: Economic Warfare.'

This list of subjects which were to be the responsibility of the Indian Defence was ridiculous and the Congress could not agree to it. It was then at this stage that Colonel Louis Johnson, President Roosevelt's personal representative in India intervened and suggested the following formula for the consideration of the Congress Working Committee.

THE JOHNSON FORMULA:

"In amplification of clause (e) of the Draft Declaration, His Majesty's Government make the following proposition upon the subject matter of the Defence of India:

(a) The Defence Department shall be placed in charge of a representative Indian member with the exception of functions to be exercised by the Commander-in-Chief as a war Member of the Executive Council.

(b) A war department will be constituted which will take over such functions of the Defence Department as are not retained by the Defence Member. A list of all the retained functions has been agreed, to which will be added further important responsibilities including the matters now dealt with by the Defence Co-ordination Department and other vital matters related to the Defence of India."

With certain amendments the Johnson Formula was more acceptable to the Congress than the original Cripps Formula. The Congress approach to the whole problem was somewhat like this: The reconstituted Government of India should be a real National Government by convention, if not by statute, the Viceroy being the mere constitutional figure-head. The Defence should be the responsibility of the Indian Member, but because of war situation and during its pendency, it was prepared to retain

the British Commander-in-Chief with control over Armed Forces in India. However, all other matters, raising of finance for Defence purposes, recruitment to the army, relation between the Government and the army, etc. was to be the responsibility of the Indian Defence Member. All political control over the army was to be retained by the Defence Member and the C-in-C was to be in charge of all actual military operations and movements of troops. For the transference of real political power, and to enable Indian leaders to enkindle the enthusiasm of the people, to make the imperialist war a people's war, this arrangement was essential. Sir Stafford Cripps could not agree to this arrangement and stuck to his old list of subjects to be under control under Defence Member. This was going back to the point from where the negotiations started and it seemed that negotiations would break on this issue alone. But an important point, meanwhile, arose which finally broke down the negotiations.

In earlier stages of the negotiations Cripps gave the Congress leaders to understand that the new Government formed would be different from the Viceroy's Exeutive Council and would function as a Cabinet. At a Press Conference on April 12, Pandit Nehru told the Pressmen that Sir Stafford Cripps himself had often used the words 'National Cabinet.' The Congress President in a letter to Sir Stafford Cripps wrote, "You told me that there would be a National Government which would function as a Cabinet and that the position of the Viceroy would be analogous to that of King in England vis-a-vis his Cabinet."

Even in his own letter to the Congress President Sir Staffords Cripp used the words 'National Government,'

He spoke of the Viceroy "embarking, forthwith upon the task of forming the New National Government, in consultation with the leaders of the Indian peoples."

Thus it was assumed and the assumption was understood and encouraged by Cripps that the re-constituted Government would function as a cabinet and the convention would be set up by which the Viceroy would not interfere in the agreed decisions of the Cabinet. But it transpired in the last interview between the Congress President and Sir Stafford Cripps that the new Government would not be formed as a Cabinet but would merely function as the Viceroy's Executive Council. When he was asked whether that Council would function as a Cabinet Cripps replied, "I am totally unable to say anything on the subject because it is completely within the discretion of the Viceroy. Go to him later on and discuss the matter with him. I cannot interfere or indicate what should be done."

Ultimately the talks ended in failure and Cripps, like all his predecessors whoever tried to solve the Indian political deadlock, returned to England without achieving success in his mission. Whatever the apportionment of blame for the failure might be, it was certain that there was a vast difference between the outlook of the British Government and that of the Congress towards the Indian problem. The Congress desired that the real transference of power should take place. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, then the Congress President, wrote in his letter of April 11 to Sir Stafford Cripps:

"We are not interested in the Congress as such gaining power, but we are interested in the Indian people as a whole having freedom and power. How the Cabinet should be for-

med and should function was a question which might have been considered after the main question was decided, that is, the extent of power which the British Government would give up to the Indian people."

But the British Government was not prepared for such a transference of power. Indeed, the attitude of the Government during the period of negotiations gave rise to the suspicion that the Cripps Mission was intended to be merely a show especially for propaganda purposes in America. The success of the Mission would have tremendously increased the moral prestige of the British Government within India and in the world outside. However, they wanted this end without parting with even a fraction of real political power in India and if the mission failed, they could easily blame the Congress for its 'intransigence' and its desire to concentrate all political power in its hands. Indeed, this is what actually happened after the breakdown of negotiations. In his parting speech at Karachi, Sir Stafford Cripps tried to throw the blame for failure on the Congress Working Committee and Gandhiji. Leaders of the Congress and Gandhiji himself repudiated the charges but since then he has kept mum. Gandhiji was blamed because Sir Stafford thought that it was he (Gandhiji) who influenced the Working Committee to reject the proposals, as their acceptance would mean participation in a violent war. Gandhiji emphatically denied this charge in an article in 'Harijan' dated 28th June, 1942. He wrote:

> "Sir Stafford knows that I was disinclined to proceed to New Delhi. Having gone there, I intended to return the same day that I reached there. But Maulana Saheb would not let me go, I wish I could have induced the Working Committee to take up its stand on pure non-violence. But it did not and could not. With it, rightly, politics were all important and it

could not, not having the conviction, allow its deliberations to be affected by the issue of non-violence. The delibcrations, therefore of the Working Committee at New Delhi were carried on without any interference or guidance on my part. Therefore, the negotitations had nothing to do, at any stage, with the question of non-violence."

Maulaua Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President also bore testimony to the following effect:

"Mahatma Gandhi's views as regards participation in any war are well known and it would be entirely untrue to suggest that the Working Committee's decisions have in any way been influenced by that view. In fact, Mahatma Gandhi made it perfectly clear to the Woking Committee that they were free to come to any decision on the merits of the proposal. Mahatmaji did not really want to participate in the earlier sittings of the Working Committtee but he was persuaded by me to stay on from day to day."

During the negotiations regarding Defence, there was a ridiculous argument advanced as to why the Government could not accept the Congress position. There were American troops in India at that time and the Government argued that their "duty to our American Allies" made it impossible to transfer responsibility in the Congress sense of the term. But this argument deceived nobody. It was well-known that vast American forces were being concentrated in all strategic positions in the world. But there was not a single instance in which the American Government objected to the control of the Defence of the country concerned being vested in the representatives of the people of that country. Such a position for America was an impossible one and it amounted

to the denial of the very basic principle of self-determination and democracy. But America never took such a position and the British Government unnecessarily dragged in the U.S.A. in the Indo-British controversy.

The Working Committee of the All India Muslim League also rejected the proposals. In their resolution they inter alia stated that, "The Committee, while expressing their gratification that the possibility of Pakistan is recognised by implication by providing for the establishment of two or more independent Unions in India, regret that the proposals of His Majesty's Government embodying the fundamentals, are not open to any modification and, therefore, no alternative proposals are invited. In view of the rigidity of the attitude of His Majesty's Government with regard to the fundamentals not being open to any modification, the Committee have no alternative but to say that the proposals in their present form are unacceptable to them for reasons given below."

Among other reasons stated, the important one was the following as embodied in the Resolution.

> "The right of non-accession to the Union, as contemplated in the Draft Declaration, has been conceded presumably in response to the insistant demands by the Mussalmans for the partition of India, but the method and procedure laid down are such as to negative the professed object, for, in the Draft proposals, the right of non-accession has been given to the existing Provinces, which have been formed from time to time for administrative convenience and on no logical basis.
>
> The Mussalmans cannot be satisfied by such a Declaration on a vital question affecting their future destiny and demand

a clear and precise pronouncement on the subject. Any attempt to solve the future problem of India by the process of evading the real issues is to court disaster.

In the Draft proposals no procedure has been laid down as to how the verdict of the Province is to be obtained in favour of or against, accession to one Union; but in the letter dated April 2, from the secretary of Sir Stafford Cripps addressed to the President of the All India Muslim League, it is stated that, 'A Province should reach the decision whether or not to stand out of the Union by a vote in the Legislative Assembly on a resolution to stand in. If the majority for accession to the Union in less than sixty per cent the minority will have the right to demand a plebiscite of the adult population.' In this connection it must be emphasised that in the Provinces where the Mussalmans are in a majority as in the case of the major Provinces of Bengal and Punjab, they are in a minority in the Legislative Assemblies; and in the Assemblies of Sind and the N.W.F.P., the total number, viz. sixty and fifty respectively, is so small and the weightage given to the non-Muslims so heavy that it can be easily manipulated and a decision under such conditions cannot be the true criterion of ascertaining the real opinion of the Mussalmans of those Provinces. As regards the suggested plebiscite in the Provinces in which the Mussalmans are in a majority, in the event of the requisite majority not being available in the Legislative Assembly, the procedure laid down is that reference shall be made to whole adult population of the Provinces and not to the Mussalmans alone; which is to deny them the inherent right to self-determination."

With the failure of the Cripps Mission, there was again the old question for the Congress: 'To be or not to be"?

The danger of invasion was very real and was growing day by day. Many prominent Congressmen were put safely behind the prison bars. Normal political activities were being suppressed everywhere. The people grew impatient of the Congress policy of 'non-embarrassment' pursued since the beginning of the war. That inaction was leading to frustration and growth of unhealthy sentiments was becoming crystal-clear to the Congress leaders. The people wanted a chance to defend their own country in their own way and resented the autocratic methods of the Government. Enemy was at the Eastern gate of India. British forces were carrying out 'planned withdrawl' from Burma and leaving the civilian population to take care of themselves as best they could. If a similar misfortune overtook India, what should the people do? Under the British, and even in face of a grave danger, they were not trusted by those who were in charge of the defence of India. Their outlook was the old nineteenth century one: if the people were armed would not their rule in India be jeopardised?

The country was seething with discontent.

And then came Gandhiji's historical appeal to the British Government to withdraw from India.

Events began to happen in quick succession.

Earlier Gandhiji demanded that Great Britain should withdraw with all her armed forces from India. Withdrawal of British forces would have hampered the Indian war effort and would have been detrimental to the cause of democracy which was very dear to Gandhiji's heart. So he further amended his demand by consenting to the British forces remaining in India during the war. He was prepared

to face even chaos if it resulted from the British withdrawal. That chaos would bring home to the Indian mind the gravity of the situation and give them a firmer basis for political adjustment which were impossible so long as the third party remained in power. His articles in Harijan were written in an earnest appeal to the British Government to take the bold step he had suggested them of withdrawing from India and leaving India to be looked after by Indians themselves. The people were excited to a high pitch and now there was no going back. During the last three years the Congress tried its level best to avoid causing embarrassment to the Government but now inaction meant disgrace and suicide of India's national honour. In a conflict, lasting for about three years between internationalism and nationalism the latter ultimately triumphed and the Congress made a final bid for power; not for it, but for the people of India as a whole. The country was now in no mood to consider the implications of the step they were taking. After full deliberation over Gandhi's "Quit India" demand and having come to the conclusion that even in the interest of world democracy, India could remain no more subservient, the All-India Congress Committee passed the famous Quit India resolution at its Bombay Session on August 8, 1942. The following is the full text of the resolution : —

> "The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution, and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it

further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

"The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and Colonial countries, and the continuation of the Imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern Imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the peoples of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

"The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism, This will not only affect materially

the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations, whose ally India would be the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

"The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can meet the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

'The A-I. C. C. therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of Indian independence, a provisional Government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of this struggle for freedom. The provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite Government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command and together with its Allied Powers and to promote the well being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a constituent assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution according to the

Congress view, should be a federal one with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with her people's united will and strength behind it.

"The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to this freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China the Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other Colonial Power.

"While the A. I. C. C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a world federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

"An independent India would gladly join such a world federation and cooperate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

"Such a federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

"The Committee regretfully realizes, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the Governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards world federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign Press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is

significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

"The A. I. C. C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring te assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian Government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in steps to be taken.

"The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road

where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

"Lastly, whilst the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on a mass struggle, it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India."

The implications of the above resolution were obvious. If the British did not withdraw in spite of the unanimous demand of the people, then under the Congress leadership they would try to wrest all political power from the alien Government. Amidst the course of a global war and with the enemy at India's eastern gate, the course the Congress advocated was fraught with danger. With British war effort in India hampered by the people, the Country's defence position would be weakened and the enemy might overrun the Indian territory and the same fate as that of Malaya and Burma might overtake India. India's resources placed in ememy's hand would then tremendously and very dangerously affect the balance of power in favour of fascism. China would have been isolated. The world democracy would have been faced with grave difficulties in its struggle in the Pacific zone. Largely, these considerations led the Communist group in the A. I. C. C. to oppose the "Quit India" resolution. But their voice was ineffective and the resolution was passed on the night of August 8. Within few hours of its passing, in the early hours of the morning of 9th August, Mahatma Gandhi, the members of the Congress Working Committee, members of the A-I. C. C. and hundreds of other provincial and local Congress leaders were arrested.

The decision to arrest them must have been taken long before the resolution was passed and instructions must have been issued for India-wide arrests. The Congress had neither instructed its followers as to what form the mass movement should take or what they should do in the event of arrest of the Congress leaders. Not only that, the Congress was still hoping for rapproachment with the Government. In his last speech at the A-I. C. C. Gandhiji had made it plain that he would initiate no movement unless he first interviewed the Viceroy and made a final attempt for settlement. The Congress President also had intended to write letters to the heads of the leading nations among the Allies to intervene on India's behalf in order to avoid future conflict and possible embarrassment to the total war effort of the Allies. The Government, however, forestalled them both and along with their colleagues they were spirited away keeping their places of internment a well-guarded secret for many months.

The people, left without instructions and without leaders, acted on the spur of the moment and disturbances occurred all over India. Means of communications, such as railways, telegraph, were interfered with. Complete hartals were observed—especially at industrial places. The Ahmedabad mill-hands abstained from attending work for three months. There were violent outbursts as well as peaceful demonstrations in protest of Government's repressive policy. The leaders of the Congress and especially Gandhiji had appealed to the people to be non-violent even under extreme provocation. But there were certain groups in the Congress who could never accept non-violence. Moreover, the Congress displayed its willingness to participate in a violent

war against aggression and now the people argued: if violence was permissible in one case (Japanese) why should it not be in the other (aggression by the British)? There was sound logic in the argument, though it lacked the appreciation of reality in India. In the former case, it was expected that the people would be provided with arms and they would be trained in their use; while in the latter case the people, however determined, would have to face the armed might of the Government. The British Government were bent upon crushing the disturbances. Mr. Churchill stated in the House of Commons that "larger reinforcements have reached India and the number of white troops in that country is larger than at any time in the British connection." The Indian police, with the help of the Indian and British troops were successful in quelling the disturbances. At some places air bombing and machine-gunning the unarmed peasant mobs was resorted to. The Government were determined to crush the people with all the forces at their command and to overcome the people in their attempt to conquer. Indeed Mr. Churchill had declared in the House of Commons with special reference to India: 'I have not become the King's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire.' Here was the conservative England speaking through Mr. Churchill. And the Conservatives being the major partners in the Government their Labour colleagues also meekly submitted to the policy of suppression of the people fighting for their freedom and actuated by a desire to play effectively their role in the world drama on the side of the Allies. The instinct of self-preservation also must have influenced the Labour in England. That country was in grave danger of total annihilation and therefore any attempt on the part of subject

people to throw off their yoke at that very critical time was resented and interpreted as an expression of sympathy for England's enemies. The revolters must be taught a lesson and therefore repression must be let loose.

The violent disturbances were quelled within few months but sporadic acts of violence continued to occur all over India. The Govt., as already noted, inflicted terrible severities on the people who were particularly undergoing all the sufferings, brought about by war, economic conditions and Governmental repression. In February 1943, Mahatma Gandhi undertook a twenty-one days' fast at the Aga Khan Palace in Poona, the place of his incarceration, in protest against the 'leonic violence' of the Government.

Signs of shortages of all necessaries of life were already apparent. Burma rice was not available due to that country's occupation by Japan. Civil administration had also broken down and the Government were not prompt in taking strong measures against hoarders of food grains and profiteers in food and other necessaries of daily life. Corruption was rampant and even high Government officials were not free from it. They, perhaps, even encouraged it. Bengal was the victim of all these anti-social corrupt elements and an unparalleled wide-spread famine took the toll of, even according to the official figures, a million and half lives. The popular estimate was between three and four millions dead. When there appeared warnings of impending famine in the Indian Press, the Government took no notice. When famine reports began to make their appearance in the Press, the Government imposed strict censorship measures on the publication of those reports. Primarily, it was the Government of India that must be held responsible for the

inhuman tragedy in Bengal. Famine was not the result of an elemental frenzy. It was the mis-management of affairs by the Provincial as well as the Central Government. The Famine Inquiry Commission, presided over by Sir John Woodhead stated : "It has been for us a sad task to inquire into the course and causes of Bengal Famine. We have been haunted by a deep sense of tragedy. A million and a half of the poor of Bengal fell victim to circumstances for which they themselves were not responsible. Society, together with its organs, failed to protect its weaker members. Indeed there was a moral and social breakdown, as well as administrative break down." The report condemned the Government for not declaring famine when it actually broke out, and for not taking stern and quick action to prevent it from spreading to greater parts of the Province. They further stated, "Considering all the circumstances, we cannot avoid the conclusion that it lay in the power of the Government of Bengal, by bold, resolute and well-conceived measure at the right time to have largely prevented the tragedy of the famine as i actually took place." The well-to-do sections of the society had resorted to hoarding out of fear of shortages of foodgrains. The business community saw in the famine an opportunity for profiteering. Prices of foodgrains rapidly rose and it was estimated that the total profit they made out of the famine was about 150 crores of rupees. Thus, for each life lost in the famine, the coffers of business men were filled to the extent of a thousand rupees.

The Bengal famine proved the utter incapacity of the Government in dealing with problems connected with the civil administration of the country and other matters in respect of the economic uplift of people. The famine

was, partly, the result of the increasing dependence of the rural people on land. By economic planning the Government could have absorbed a large proportion of the rural population in industry and comparatively would have reduced the burden on land. But the British Government regarded country's administration as efficient only if the patriotic voice of the people was effectively supressed and their economic exploitation continued undisturbed in the interests of the British governing classes.

And so the members of the Congress Working Committee along with thousands of their followers remained incarcerated throughout the period of three years (1942-1945) when the fate of the country and that of other nations of the world was being decided by the course of the most totalitarian war ever fought in the history of the world.

CHAPTER V.

PAKISTAN

The Mountbatten Plan of June 3rd 1947 contemplated the division of India on religious basis. The Muslim majority areas in North-Western and North-Eastern parts of India were given freedom to secede from the Indian Union and constitute into a seperte state of Pakistan.

The two provinces, the Punjab and Bengal, were also divided on religious basis and the Hindu majority areas in both the Provinces were given the choice to join either Constituent Assembly in accordance with the wishes of the people as expressed through their representatives in the Provincial Assemblies. ❊

We give below population figures, areas, etc, of the Pakistan State as it finally emerged according to this plan.

MUSLIM PUNJAB

17. Districts.

1. Rawalpindi (80.00)§
2. Gujrat (85.58)
3. Shahapur (83.68)
4. Jhelum (89.42)

❊ See Appendix C. for the full text of the Mountbatten Plan.

§ Figures in the bracket refer to the percentage of Muslims in the district population according to the 1941 Census Report. Recent transfer of population bothways in the divided Punjab have obviously not been taken into account here.

5. Attock	(90.42)
6. Mianwalli	(86.16)
7. Multan	(78.01)
8. Jhang	(82.61)
9. Lyallpur	(62.85)
10. Montgomery	(69.11)
11. Muzaffargarh	(86.42)
12. Dera Ghazi Khan	(88.16)
13. Lahore	(60.62)
14. Sialkot	(62.99)
15. Gujranwalla	. (70.45)
16. Sheikhupura	(63.68)
17. Gurdaspur.	(51.14)

Area in Square Miles.	05,775
Hindus.	22,83,309
Muslims.	1,23,63,669
Sikhs.	16, 83, 855
Christians.	4,39,006
Rest.	1,01,061
Total Population.	1,68,70,900

MUSLIM BENGAL:

16 Districts:—

1. Nadia	(61.26)
2. Jessore	(60.21)
3. Murshidabad	(56.55)
4. Rajshahi	(74.64)
5. Dinajpur	(50.20)
6. Rangpur	(71.41)
7. Bogra	(88.93)
8. Pabna	(77.06)
9. Malda	(56.78)
10. Dacca	(87.29)
11. Mymensing	(77.44)
12. Faridpur	(84.78)
13. Bakarganj	(72.33)
14. Tippera	(77.09)
15. Noakhali	(81.36)
16. Chitagong	(74.55)

Area in square Miles:	50530
Hindus :	1,13,84,495
Muslims:	2,87,10,462
Rest :	8,69,822
Total Population	4,09,64,779

SIND

Area	:	48,135 Square Miles
8 Districts.		
Hindus	:	12,29,926
Muslims	:	32,08,325
Rest	:	96,752
Total Population		45,35,008

NORTH-WEST-FRONTIER-PROVINCE

Area	:	14,263 Square Miles
6 Districts		
Hindus	:	1,80,321
Muslims	:	27,88,797
Rest	:	68,949
Total Population		30,38,067

BRITISH BALUCHISTAN

Area	:	54,456 Square Miles
6 Districts		
Hindus	:	44,623
Muslims	:	4,38,920
Rest	:	18,078
Total Population		5,01,631

SYLHET DISTRICT [in Assam]

Area	:	5, 478 Sq. miles.
Hindus	:	11,49,514
Muslims	:	18,92,117
Rest	:	74,971
Total Population		31,16,602
Pakista.. Total Area		23,66, 37 Sq. miles.
Total Population		6?,[illegible]6,987

The acceptance of this Plan by the two major political parties has put an end to the idea that India's political frontiers coincide with her geographical boundaries. The dream of generations of Indian nationalists vanished before their very eyes and they had reluctantly to give their assent to this division of India. In his broadcast speech on June 3, 1947 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said, "It is with no joy in my heart that I commend these parposals (British Government's Plan of June, 3) to you, though I have no dobut that this is the right course. The proposal to allow certain parts to secede, if they so will, is painful for any of us to contemplate."

However "painful" the division might have been it has now become a living reality and it will be instructive to the nationalists to inquire how these astounding results were achieved by the Muslim League within a very short period of seven years since they passad their famous Resolution demading Pakistan, at Lahore in 1940. The nationatists now cherish the dream that at some future date these two seperated pats of India will reunite and constitute into one powerful State. It will be instructive therefore to study how the Muslims of India were alienated against the Indian nationalists.

The Growth of Muslim Separatism

The All-India Muslim League was started in 1906 with British encouragement as we have seen in a previous chapter. The Muslim League was at that time only a microscopic organisation and it was led by self-interested and feudal elements, like Aga Khan, the Nawab of Dacca and others.

In 1909, the Morley-Minto Reforms granted separate electorates to the Muslims. This was the thin

end of wedge which was ultimately intended to antagonise the two great communities — Hindus and Muslims. The period between 1916 to 1924 was an era of thorough co-operation between the League and Congress on the basis of the Lucknow Pact. The Congress supported the Khilafat Movement and the Muslim masses joined the Congress movement of non-co-operation. But the years succeeding 1924 witnessed an orgy of communal riots and the Muslim League alienated itself from the Congress. The idea that Muslims form a separate and distinct nationatity was first given expression to by Dr. Sir Mahammad Iqbal in his Presidential address at the Allahabad Session of the All-India Muslim League in December 1930. He explained:

> "Communalism in its higher aspect, is indispensible to the formation of a harmoneous whole in a country like India. The Units of Indian society are not territorial as in European countries. India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages, and professing different religions. Their behaviour is not at all determined by common race consciousness. Even the Hindus do not form a homogeneous group. The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognising the fact of communal groups. The Muslim demand for the creation of Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified. The resolution of the All Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi is, to my mind, wholly inspired by this noble ideal of a harmoneous whole which, instead of stifling the respective individualities of its component wholes, affords them chances of fully working out the possibilities that may be latent in them. And I have no doubt

that this House will emphatically endorse the Muslim demands embodied in this resolution, Personally, I would go further than the demands embodied in the resolution. I would like to see the Punjab, N.W.F.P., Sind, and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consilidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims at least of North-West India."

Dr.Iqbal's proposals did not, however,amount to anything more than the general readjustment of provincial boundaries to consolidate Muslim provinces into a powerful constituent unit of Indian Fedration and thereby safeguard Muslim rights. The idea that it was Dr. Iqbal who originally conceived of the Pakistan demand has no ground. When Edward Thomson attributed the genesis of Pakistan to Dr. Iqubal, the latter denounced it and said that the formation of separate nation of Pakistan would be disastrous to all the parties concerned viz. the Hindus, Muslims and the British. The Muslim League Subjects Committee considered the idea put forth by Dr. Iqbal in his address and did not find it worth adopting.

On the death of Dr. Iqbal interested parties took advantage of the great poet's name and popularity and interpreted the proposal embodied in his presidential address as supporting tne establishment of a seprate Muslim state in India. In 1933 Coatman C. I. E surmised that the creation of strong and united India including British India, Indian States, N. W. F. P. and the border land beyond it was day by day becoming impossible and prophesied that the North-West Provinces would be consolidated into a Muslim State, forming the "fringe" of the Middle Asiatic Muslim nations

The hint was quickly taken up by a group of Muslim students then studying in England. Choudhari Rahmat Ali ,(now Barrister Rahmat Ali) their spokesman, issued a pamphlet entitled "Now or Never" and advocated the partition of the country in such a way that the Puniab, N. W. F. P. Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan should be formed into a separate Muslim State of Pakistan. The pamphlet was circulated among the Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference but it made no impression on them. The proposal contained in the Pamphlet was considered an astounding one and even Muslim leaders did not find thier way to accept it and all of them denounced it as a day dream of some fanatic students.

The Joint Select Committee was taking evidence to ascertain the views of Indian representatives both Hindus and Muslims relating to India's future constitution and even that Committee found that Muslim representatives were opposed to the idea put forth by Rahmat Ali as is seen from the following.

Question 9598 Sir Reginald Craddock: I will pass on.

If any of the delegates or the witnesses would like to answer: Will they tell me whether there is a scheme for federation of Provinces under the name of Pakistan ?

Answer 9598—Abdullah Yusuf Ali, C.B.E.: As far as I know it is only a student's scheme. No responsible people have put it forward.

Sir Reginald Craddock : They have not so far, but, as you say, you advance very quickly in India, and it may be when those students grow up it will be put forward; that scheme must be in the minds of the people, anyhow.

Mr. Zafrulla Khan : What is the question ?

Sir Reginald Craddock : I wanted to know whether the witnesses had acquaintence with a scheme which was drawn for what is called Pakistan.

Mr. Zafrulla Khan : We have already had the reply that it was a student's scheme and there is nothing in it. What is the further question ?

Q. 9599...Mr. Issac Foot : What is Pakistan ?

A. 9599--Mr. Zafrulla Khan : So far as we have considered it, we have considered it chimerical and impracticable. It means the federation of certain provinces.

Q. 9600 Sir Reginald Craddock : I have received communications about the proposal of forming certain Muslim States under the name of Pakistan.

A. 9600—Dr. Khalil Shujauddin : Perhaps it will be enough to say that no such scheme has been considered by any representative gentleman or association so far.

Thus we note that in 1933, responsible Indian Muslim, leaders did not favour the creation of a separate Muslim State in India and discouraged the idea of Pakistan. Yet this opposition to the Pakistan idea did not mean that they were in favour of growth of nationalism among the Muslim community in India. The reactionary Muslim leaders had demanded separate electorates for Indian Muslims and that demand was conceded in 1909. From this time onwards these leaders were putting forth extravagant demands as a price for their co-operation in the nationalist cause. By 1928 these demands were formulated in what is known as Forteen Points * and a section of Indian Muslim leaders

See Page 73.

stuck up to these demands as a basis for all future constitutional develepments concerning the Muslim community in India. But some irresponsible Muslims in England led by Rahmat Ali, made a great stride and outdid even their elder statesmen in conceiving and propagating the ideal of Pakistan. At the back of this propaganda by Rahmat Ali and his co-workers, Sheikh Mohmed Saddiq, Mohamed Aslam Khan, and Inyatulla Khan, there was clearly discernible the hand of British Imperialism. Rahmat Ali was a student of the Cambridge University, but he was more interested in politics than his studies. He had no means of support and used to get funds for his luxuries, entertainments and propagandist activities from India Office. No Muslim in India or abroad had heard or talked of Pakistan till Rahmat Ali advocated it in his pamphlet. Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference also took no interest in Rahmat Ali's advocacy of Pakistan as seen above. The Conservative Party leaders like Mr. Churchill and Lloyd George and the English diehard Press were more interested in the idea of Pakistan than the Muslim leaders thmselves and by implication they suggested that these leaders should take up the demand for Pakistan. By taking constant interest in Rahmat Ali's scheme for the creation of a separate Sovereign Federation of Pakistan the Conservative Party inspired a section of Muslim leaders to demand the establishment of a Muslim State in India.

Rahmat Ali was making incessant efforts to convert Indian Muslim leaders to his theory of separate nationalism and the establishment of a National State for Indian Muslims. But all his attempts proved futile and the Muslim League staunchly resisted his doctrine. Rahmat Ali conceived the formation of several Muslim States in India. He is regarded as the father of Pakistan and before

he was eclipsed by Mr. Jinnah he was the only advocate of Pakistan. He was first ridiculed as being irresponsible and treated as a fanatic medieval dreamer. But he was faithfully persistent in his advocacy of the Pakistan idea which ultimately held the Muslim masses in its firm grip with what disastraus results we all are aware now. Therefore it would be interesting to know what exactly his ideas were.

In his pamphlet the 'Millat and its Mission' Rahmat Ali set out the Seven Commandments for the "Seventh" "Continent of Dinia". These Commandments were :

1. Avoid Minoritism.
2. Avow Nationalism.
3. Acquire Proportional Territory.
4. Consolidate the Individual Nations.
5. Co-ordinate them under "Pak Commonwealth of Nations"
6. Convert "India" into "Dinia".
7. Organise "Dinia" and its dependencies into Pakasia."

In communicating the above ideas to the Millat, Rahmat Ali argued :

"On the otner hand, it is certain that if we think and act in terms of the Faith, the Fraternity, and the Fatherland, we shall achieve the sovereign freedom of the Millat and the supreme fulfilment of her mission throughout the Continent of Dinia and its dependencies. That is the twin ideals that have been bequeathed to us by our ancestors and the achievement of which is vital to both our history and our hopes in Pakasia.

Let us, therefore, in this spirit of eternal dedication, try to do this duty and begin with the first revolution.

We know to our cost that the first revolution reduced our Fraternity from the position of a mighty force to that of a medium factor in the power politics of the world. Further, it punished our Millat for the blunder of following 'Dynasticism' of fraternising with 'Indianism' and of establishing a heterogeneous State in the continent of Dinia. Furthermore, it eclipsed our nations in Pakistan, Bang-i-Stan, and Osmanistan; extinguished our empire in Dinia; upset the equilibrium of Asia to our disadvantage as a people: and started a new cycle in the history of the world. ——— "

In October, 1942, Rahmat Ali published a pamphlet entitled "The Millat and Its Mission". In it he explains the fundamentals of his theory.

"What is the fundamental truth about minorities?

It is that there are times when the minorities are the heralds of their original nations, and others when they are the symbols of their helplessness. Again, there are times when nations can fully assimilate minorities and others when minorities can fatally sabotage such nations. Finally, there are times when to leave your minorities in foreign lands or to keep alien minorities in your own lands is a sound policy, and others when to do neither is childish folly. Also when to do neither is saving statesmanship, but when to do both is sure suicide.

It is this last contingency which concerns us in the current phase of our History, upon us to remember that, in the past, minoritism has ever proved itself a major enemy of Millat; that at present it is sabotaging us religiously, culturally

and politically even in our national lands; and that, in future it would destroy us throughout the continent of Dinia and its dependencies.

Hence the commandment: Avoid minoritism; which means that we must not leave our Minorities in Hindu lands, even if the British and the Hindus offer them the so-called constitutional safeguards. For no safeguards can be substituted for nationhood which is their birthright. Nor must we keep Hindu and-or Sikh minorities in our lands, even if they themselves were willing to remain with or without any special safeguards for they will be never of us. Indeed, while in ordinary times they will retard our national reconstruction, in times of crisis they will betray us and bring about our redestruction.

He further explained the second commandment:

II. AVOW NATIONALISM: — This commandment is complementary to the previous one and means that Muslims must assert and demand the recognition of the distinct national status of their minorities in the Hindu majority region and reciprocally offer to give similar status to the Hindu and Sikh minorities in Pakistan, Bang-i-stan, Osmanistan.

Undoubtedly, therefore, their salvation lies in 'Nationhood', which we must demand for our minorities in the Hindu majority region of Dinia and its dependencies, and do that in the assurance that whatever the result it can do nothing but good to the Millat. The reason is that, if the British and Hindus accept our demands, it will liberate our 35 million brethren now caged in Hindustan (the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh) Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces, Bundhelkhand and Malva, Rajistan, the Bombay Presidency and South India, Western Ceylon and Eastern Ceylon; transform

them into seven natians : free Pakistan, Bag-i-stan, and Osmanistan from the dangers of minoritism, and above all, ensure the spiritual purity, the fundamental unity, and the national homogeneity of the Millat."

Rahmat Ali's idea of Pakistan was entirely different from what we know of it today. Pakistan of his conception included provinces lying on India's north-western boundary viz; Punjab, N. W. F. P., Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan. Besides Pakistan he also visualized the formation of many other independent Muslim States in India such as Bangistan (Bengal with Assam as its hinterland) Osmanistan (Hydrabad State). Later on he also advocated the formation of so many other Muslim States such as Haideristan, Farudistan, Siddquistan, Moplistan etc. Rahmat Ali was scoffed at and ridiculed. But to our cost we know to-day that Pakistan has become a reality. Who can now confidently prophesy that his other ideas may not take shape in future ? We all are painfully aware of how the most advanced among peoples of Europe became hypnotised and meekly submitted to and adopted fantastic Nazi theories of race superiority, authoritarian method of government etc. Propaganda is now developed into a science and intensive propaganda carried with modern means is capable of producing amazing results.

To revert to our original subject.

In 1927 the Nehru Committee brought forth its Report and the Congress adopted it giving an ultimatum to the British Government to accept it within a period of one year i. e. by the end of 1929. The Nehru Report expressed its antagonism to separate electorates and for that reason Mulsims rejected it. In the year 1927 pro-

minent Mulsim leaders met in Delhi and put forward some proposals. Had these proposals been accepted by the Congress, these leaders would have agreed to joint electorates for Provincial and Central Legislatures. These proposals were:—

1. Sind should be made into a separate Province.

2. The N. W. F. P. and Baluchistan were to have the same constitutional status as the rest of Indian Provinees.

3. The proportion of Muslim representation in the Punjab and Bengal to be in accordance with their population.

4. One-third of the total number of seats should be given to the Muslims in the Central Legislature.

Sometime later a Muslim All Parties' Conference was convened in Delhi (31st December, 1928) and it passed a resolution to the following effect:—

A. The only form of Government suitable to Indian conditions is a Federal System with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent states, the Central Government having control only over such matter of cammon interest as may be specially entrusted to it by the constitution;

B. No bill, resolution, or amendment regarding inter-communal matters should be moved, discussed, or passed by any Legislature, Central or Provincial if three-fourths majority of the members of the community affected thereby opposed it.

C. The Mussalmans should have their representatives in the Legislature and other statutary self-governing bodies through their own separate electorates, of which they should not be deprived without their own consent; they should have their due share in the Central and provincial Cabinets

their majorities in the Legislative Councils in Provinces where they were in a majority in the population should not be affected and in Provinces where they were in a minority they should in no case have a representation less than that enjoyed by them under the existing laws; their representation in the Central Legislature should be 33 1/3rd per cent.

D. Sind should be created into a separate Province.

E. The North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan should have the same constitutional reforms as other Provinces; they should have adequate representation in the services; there should be adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal law, charitable institutions and for due share for grants-in-aid.

It was most emphatically declared that no future constitution for India by whomsoever devised whether by the Congress or the British Government would be acceptable to the Muslim India unless that constitution conformed with the principles outlined in the above resolution.

Later on the Muslim demands went on increasing and the Muslim League adopted what is known as Fourteen Points of Mr. Jinnah.

Thus we see that the Muslims were putting forward increasing demands and as a price of their co-operation they were insisting on their acceptance by other parties. In the later period almost all of these demands were conceded and given effect to in the 1935 Government of India Act. At the conclusion of the Second R. T. C. the British Prime Minister had announced that the British Governor's Provinces should

be governed by responsible ministries having confidence of the popular Legislatures and without being subject to outside interference; that the N. W. F. P. should be consituted into a separate Governor's Province enjoying the same constitutional status as other Indian provinces and that Sind should be constituted into a separate province if satisfactory means of financing it could be found. As regards the communal disagreement he declared that His Majesty's Government were determined that even this disability should not be permitted to be a bar to the progress. "This would mean that His Majesty's Government would have to settle for you, not only your problems of representation but also to decide as wisely and justly as possible, what checks and balances the constitution is to contain, to protect the minorities from unrestricted and tyrannical use of the democratic principle expressing itself solely through the majority power."

The Indian political parties being unable to come to any understanding with regard to communal problem the British Prime Minister was requested to give his own award which he did in August 1932.

The Communal Award introduced the system of weightage in the Provincial Legislatures in favour, particularly of the Muslims. But this system was to work in a peculiar way. It granted weightage to Muslims where they were in minority; but in provinces where Hindus were in a minority and the Muslims were formin[illegible] majority the former were not given any weightage. Not only that but they were not given representation in the Legislatures proportionate to their population. For example, in Bengal, the Hindus were about fortyfive percent and the Muslim fiftyfive percent. But the allocation of seats for each community was as follows :—

Muslims	Total No. of seats	Percentage in the Legislature	Population percentage
,,	119	47.6	54.3
Hindus	80	32	44.8
Europeans	25	10	0.01

It would be seen from the above table that the Europeans were given a weightage of 1,00,000 per cent in order to protect their commercial interests in Bengal. It was to be expected that in accordance with the system followed in other provinces this weightage to a microscopical minority community should have been given, if at all, from the seats of the majority community. But in giving this weightage both communities had to suffer and the minority had to suffer more heavily than the majority community while the majority community itself was reduced to a minority.

The Government Act of 1935 conceded almost all of the Muslim demands. The Muslim League previously expressed its strong opposition to any change in the communal Award and its strict adherence to it unless the parties concerned were agreeable to any change in it.

In April, 1936 the Muslim League passed a resolution in which it recorded its emphatic protest against a constitution forced on the people of India but declared itself favourable to working the constitution in the provincial sphere. Its resolution, inter alia stated.

"The League considers that having regard to the conditions prevailing in the country, the Provincial Scheme of the Constitution be utilised for what it is worth inspite of its most objectionable features which rendered real control and responsiblity or Ministry and Legislature over the entire field of Government and and administration nugatory."

It also expressed its opinion that the All India Federal Scheme was most reactionary, retrograde, injurious and fatal to the vital interest of British India vis-a-vis Indian States, and was calculated to thwart and delay indefinitely the realisation of India's most cherished goal of complete responsible Government.

The same session of the League appointed a Parliamentary Board which was authorised to conduct ensuing elections to the Provincial Legislatures. This Board issued an Election Manifesto which stated :

"The main principles on which we expect our representatives in various Legislatures to work will be (1) that the present Provincial Constitution and the proposed Central Constitution should be replaced immediately by democratic full self-government (2) and that in the meantime, representatives of the Muslim League in the various Legislatures will utilize the Legislatures in order to extract the maximum benefit out of the constitution for the uplift of the people in the various spheres of national life. The Muslim League party must be formed as a corollary so long as separate electorates exist, but there will be free co-operation with any group or groups whose aims and ideals are approximately the same as those of the League Party."

From the above resolution and the Election Manifesto it becomes clear that the opposition of the Muslim League to the 1935 Act was based on purely political and not communal grounds. The programme which the Election Manifesto laid down contained only two clauses which referred particularly to Muslims viz. (1) to protect the religious rights of Mussalmans and (2) to devise measures for the ameliora

tion of the general condition of the Mussalmans. It can therefore, be ascertained that the Muslim League opposed the 1935 Act not because it was particularly detrimental to the interests of Indian Muslims but because it was detrimental to the interests of the whole of India. Besides the League there was yet another group dominated by Fazl-i-Husain, who held the view that a new non-communal and economic programme should be formulated and on the basis of that programe he organised the Nationalist Uninionst Party in the Punjab. Mr. Jinnah, the newly elected President of the Muslim League, on the other hand, started his work vigourously by establishing branches of the Muslim League all over India, giving a new impetus to the League. He also undertook an intensive propaganda thereby creating a sharp difference between the Muslim League and the Muslim Conference led by Mian Fazl-i-Husain who detested the idea of forming a purely communal body especially in the Punjab. As a result of conflict between these two Muslim organisations, the former was routed at the provincial elections. The League candidates returned to the Provincial Assemblies were in a microscopic minority. It had no members in Bihar, C. P., N. W. F. P., Orissa and Sind and in the Punjab in a house of 175 there was only one Muslim Leaguer. Muslim votes were 7,319,445 and out this total the League got only 321, 772 or 4.4 per cent.

After elections came the question of forming coalition Governments in provinces. Mr. Jinnah explained the League position in the following terms :

" The constitution and policy of the League do not prevent us from co-operation with others. On the contrary, it is part and parcel of our basic principle that we are free and

ready to co-operate with any group or party from the very inception, or inside the legislature, if the basic principles are determined by common consent."

As a result of elaborate correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru on the one hand and Mr. Jinnah on the other, it became evident that 'basic principles' could not be determined by 'common consent' and therefore no coalition ministries could be formed in provinces. Being unable to share power, the League was embittered against the Congress and subsequently in June 1938 presented it with the following demands:

1. The Bande Mataram song should be given up.
2. The Muslim majorities in the provinces where such majorities exist must not be affected by any territorial re-distribution or adjustment;
3. Muslims' practice of cow slaughter should not be interfered with;
4. Muslims' right to call Azan and perform their religious ceremonies should not be interfered with in any way;
5. Muslims' personal law and culture should be guaranteed by statute;
6. The share of the Muslims in the State services should be definitely fixed in the Constitution by a statutory enactment;
7. The Congress should withdraw all opposition to the Communal Award, and should not describe it as a negation of nationalism;
8. Statutory guarantee should be given that the use of Urdu shall not be curtailed;

9. Representation in local bodies should be governed by the principles underlying the Communal Award i. e., separate electorates and popular strength;

10 The Tricolour Flag should be changed or alternately the Flag of the Muslim League should be given equal importance;

11 Recognition of the League as the one and only authoritative and representive organization of the Indian Muslims.

These demands of the Muslim League were the result of what is termed as the "Atrocities" perpetrated by the Congress Ministries against the Muslim minorities. The Council of the All India Muslim League on March 20, 1938 had passed a resolution to the effect that "whereas numerous complaints had reached the Central Office of the hardship, ill-treatment, and injustice that were meted out to the Muslims in various Congress Government Provinces and particularly to those who were workers and members of the Muslim League, the Council resolves that a special committee be appointed consisting of the following members to collect all information, to make all necessary inquiries and take such steps as may be considered proper and to submit its report to the Council from time to time. The Committee was presided over by the Raja of Pirpur and it submitted its report known as the 'Pirpur Report' on November 15,1938. It cotained certain charges and grievances against the Congress Ministries and the League made a great capital out of it for propaganda purposes. The atrocities to which the Report referred were investigated by the Congress Ministries concerned and it was found that almost all of them were baseless and without any substantial grounds. Mr. Fazlul Huq gave a challange to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to go round

with him and ascertain the truth of the atrocity charge. Pandit Nehru accepted the challenge but Mr. Huq never cared to push the matter any further and withdrew himself from the field. Constitutionally it was the Governor's special responsibility to interfere in cases where administration of the Provincial Ministries was prejudicial to the interests of the minorities. Never once during the two years the Congress Ministries were in office did the Governor of any single Province ever interfere in the working of the Congress administration. Not only that. Before the Congress Ministries resigned the Congress Parliamentary Board directed the Congress Prime Ministers to invite the Provincial Governors to point out any policy or act of the Congress Ministries which adversely affected the interests of the minorities including the Muslims. But in not a single Province was any Governor able to point out any such case. On the contrary, the Governor of the United Provinces who could not be accused of having any sympathies for the Congress testified, on his retirement, to the most scrupulous care of the Congress Ministry of his Province in dealing with problems concerning Muslims. In October, 1939, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, then the Congress President, suggested to Mr. Jinnah that the cases of complaints against the Congress Ministries instituted by the Muslim League and the atrocity-charges levelled against them be investigated by an impartial authority such as Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court. But Mr. Jinnah did not agree to this proposal. His reply to the Congress President was, "The matter is now under His Excellency's (Viceroy's) consideration and he is the proper authority to take such action and adopt such methods as would meet our requirements and restore complete sense of security in those Provinces where

the Congress Ministries are in charge of the administration." However, the Viceroy took no action in the matter and Mr. Jinnah also did not pursue it any further.

We shall now state some of the 'atrocities' which were the bone of contention between the Congress and the League. These 'atrocities' included the following:-[1] the singing of Bande Mataram; [2] the hoisting of Tricolour Flag; [3] the Congress programme of Muslim mass contact; [4] the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education; [5] Vidya Mandir Scheme of the Central Province; etc. It was particularly the Muslim Mass Contact of the Congress that had been attacked by the Muslim League. The Muslim League contended that it alone had the right to approach the Muslims. According to the League the Congress was a Hindu organisation and it had, therefore, no right to go to the Muslim masses and speak to them about any political, economic, or social matters. This was very undemocratic in principle as it took away the very fundamental principle of democracy viz. the right of forming an association and propagating its ideals among the people. The Congress could not agree to any such demand because it would have meant denying its very past history of fifty years. It would have meant that the Congress was a Hindu body and as such could approach to or speak in the name of Hindus only. This would have resulted in the loss of its national character and betrayed the Nationalist Muslims who had stood by the Congress through thick and thin. Moreover, there were other Muslims organisations in the country who denied the Muslim League contention that it was the sole representative of the Muslims in India. Some of these organisations were; The Ahrars, The Jamiat-ul-Ulema, The Shia Conference, The Momins who had a

separate organisation of their own and repudiated the Muslim League's claim to speak on their behalf: Khuddam-i-Watan (servants of the mother country—the organisation of the nationalists of Baluchistan); The Khuda-i-Khidmatgars of the N. W. F. P.; The Kroshak Proja Party of Bengal; the Khaksars and the Unionists of the Punjab. In justice to all these Muslim organisations the Congress could not accept the claim of the Muslim League to speak as the only authoritative body of the Indian Muslims.

All the efforts by representative Congress leaders to bring about a settlement between the Muslim League and the Congress were without any success. Unless and until the Congress recognised the Muslim League as the only authoritative representative organisation of the Indian Muslims there would be no progress in any talks held between the representatives of the two organisations. Mr. Jinnah wrote in a letter to Mahatma Gandhi on March 3, 1938, "We have reached the stage when no doubt should be left. You recognise the All-India Muslim League as the authoritative and representative organisation of Mussalmans in India and on other hand you represent the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. It is on that basis we can proceed further and devise a machinery of approach." When the Congress could not accept this basis all further talks were useless. Under no circumstances could the Congress allow itself to be a purely Hindu body, having no contacts with the Muslim masses. This position of the Congress and especially its Muslim mass contact programme was resented by many Muslim League leaders.

The President of the Andhra Muslim League Conference " referred to the attempt on the part of Congress

to create split among the Muslims by weaning some of them from the Muslim League. The attempt an the part of Congress to enroll more Muslims as Congressmen was bound to be considered a hosttile act aiming at the disintegration of the Muslim solidarity." Referring to the Muslim mass contact of the Congress, Mr. Jinnah declared, "The Congress attempt under the guise of establishing mass contact with the Musalmans is calculated to divide and weaken and break the Musalmans and is an attempt to detach them from their accredited leaders."

This extravagant contention of the League deprived the right of the Indian Muslims to join any other political orgonisation except the League. Neither was there left any choice to any political organisation to have any contact with the Muslims, who were already impressed upon by the League propagandist that they were being ill-treated under the Congress regime and their life, liberty, property and honour were in danger. The League became restless when it foresaw the chances of the Congess controlling the Centre because of its strict descipline and the influence it had begun to develop in the Indian States.

We have seen above that the League's attempts at the Coalition Ministries were futile. This angered the League into raising the bogus cry of Congress atrocities and it raged furious when the Congress decided to turn towards Muslim masses. With no legislative backig and mass support, it tried to capture the fancy of Muslim masses by raising a demand for separate Muslim existence in India's national life and fight for it with fanatic fervour. At its Sind session in 1938 under the Presidentship of Mr. Jinnah the following resolution was passed: "The Sind Provincial Muslim

League Conference considers it absolutely essential in the interests of abiding peace of the vast Indian Continent and in the interests of unhampered cultural development, the economic and social betterment, and political self-determination of the two nations, known as Hindus and Muslims, that India may be divided into two federations viz. Federation of Muslim States and Federation of Non-Muslim States"

Here in this resolution is found the official recognition of the Pakistan movement.

In September, 1939 the Working Committee of the Muslim League explained the 'Two Nation Theory and Partition, by stating as follows:

> "The developments that have taken place, especially since the inaugaration of the Provincial Constitution based on the so-called democratic and parliamentary system of Government and the recent experiences of two years have established beyond any doubt that it has resulted wholly in a permanent communal majority and the domination by the Hindus over the Muslim minorities, whose life, liberty, property, and honour are in danger and even their religious rights and culture are being assailed and annihilated every day under the Congress Governments in various Provinces. While Muslim India stands against exploitation of the people of India and has repeatedly declared in favour of 'Free India' and is equally opposed to domination by Hindu majority over the Mussalmans and other minorities and vassalisation of Muslim India, and is irrevocably opposed to any Federal objective, which must necessarily result in a majority community rule under the guise of democracy and parliamentary system of Government. Such a constitution is totally unsuited to the genius of the peoples of the country, which is composed of various nataionalities and does not constitute a national state.',

So long the Muslim League's demand was for effective safeguards for Muslim community's religious, cultural, and other rights. But now it began to question the very fundamental principles of democracy which brings the majority community rule over the other community quite different from it in its culture, religion, language, and in many other ways. So the democracy and parliamentary system of government was described as totally unsuited to India.

All this developed into a demand for Pakistan in the summer of 1940. The All India Muslim League at its Lahore Session in 1940 passed the following resoluion :—

1. While approving and endorsing the action taken by the Council and the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated the 7th of August, 17th and 18th of September and 22nd of October, 1939 and 3rd of February 1940 on the constitutional issue, this Session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that, the scheme of federation embodied in the Government of India Act 1935, is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

2. It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October, 1939, made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935 is based will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties, interests, and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole

constitutional plan is reconsidered de novo and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

3. Resolved that it is the considered view of this Session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

4. That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specially provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This Session further authorises the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally

by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs, and such other matters as may be necessary."

Next year in 1941, at its annual session at Madras Mr. Jinnah re-emphasised the aim of the Muslim League in the following terms:

"Let me tell you as clearly as I can possibly do so that the goal of the All-India Muslim League is that we want to establish a completely independent state in the North-West and Eastern Zones of India with full control finally of defence, currency, exchange, etc. We do not want under any circumstances a constitution of an all-India character with one Government at the Centre."

Barring the League all other parties, including many Muslim organisations, found it very difficult to subscribe to the two-nation theory upon which was based the League demand for a separate, sovereign Muslim State in India. We will now examine the two-nation theory as propounded by Mr. Jinnah.

Two-Nation Theory

The following conversation is reported between Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Edward Thomson:

Mr. Edward Thompson:- "Two nations, Mr. Jinnah? Confronting each other in every province? Every town? Every village?

Mr. Jinnah:- "Two Nations. Confronting each other in every Province. Every Town. Every Village. That is the only solution.

Mr. E. T.:-"That is a very terrible solution, Mr. Jinnah!

Mr. Jinnah:-It is a terrible solution. But it is the only one.

To the League India is not one country but a sub-continent comprising two nations Hindus and Muslims. A nation is formed of a people who have social, racial, religious, linguistic, economice and historical unity and who inhabit a well-defined territory. The people who exhibit this unity are a distinct nation by themselves. In the League's opinion two such distinct peoples inhabit the Indian sub-continent and therefore each of them forms a separate nation by itself. So long the Indian Muslims were referred to as a minority community and even Mr. Jinnah never hesitated to accept a minority position for Muslims. But recent developments and the impact of nation-wide political agitation and struggles contributed to arouse the political consciousness of the Muslim masses and they became alive to their separate nationality as distinct from Indian nationalism. In this connection it is interesting to note the prophecy of M. Stalin in a speech made as far back as 1924. He said:

"Nowadays India is spoken of as a single whole. Yet there can be hardly any doubt that in the case of a revolutionary upheaval in India many hitherto unknown nationalities will emerge on the scene."

What Stalin forecast in 1924 came true in 1940.

How could Stalin forecast this and why did Muslims feel an urge to evolve a distinct nationality in India?

Indian nationalism as it is understood today is of very recent growth. India was brought under one administrative

centre by the British which fact contributed not in a small degree to the growth of modern Indian nationalism. Introduction of modern means of communication and transport brought distant provinces and peoples inhabiting them close together and fostered the growth of a sort of sentimental unity among them. But this sentimental unity never did and never could obliterate the inherent differences that were the characteristics of different peoples inhabiting different parts of the country. As in all other European countries, so in India, nationalism made its appearance as a corollary of the Industrial Era and growth and victory of capitalism over feudalism. Several nation-states such as the British, the French etc. emerged out of the industrial and political revolutions in Europe. In eastern European countries, however, the process was not exactly the same as in the western European countries. Austria-Hungary and Russia are the examples of multi-national states in which predominent role was played by Germans and Russians. India is also a multi-national state in which the Muslim nationality was always made to play a subservient role. In face of a common enemy, they could not realise that they were a distinct nationality and therefore had a right, if they so chose, to a separate national existence. But they have a distinct social order and when political frusrtation overtook the Muslim League, they contended that the Muslim nationality could not be obsorbed in the general Indian nationality which was nothing but a Hindu nationality which broadly speaking tried to evolve a united India. And with that end in the Hindu nationalism made several attempts to bring unity between these two nationolisms. These attempts were :—

1. The concession of separate electorates in 1909.

2. Lucknow Pact of 1916.

3. Attempt made in 1923 by the Congress and the League to arrive at a settlement. (Solam Pact and Bengal Pact).

4. The Nehru Report (1928).

5. The Communal Award (1932).

All these attempts were by way of compromise with Muslim nationalism which could never be satisfied unless its right to full-fleged nationality was recognised by all concerned. Since the end of world war I there came into being a progressive political ideology of self-determination. If democracy is to prevail every nationlity must be given its right to determine whether it would form into a separate nation distinct from the one in which it has been so long mingled. If that nationality decides in favour of a separate political existance none can prevent it from exercising this right. Indian nationalists' demand for freedom was also based on the same principle. India had the inherent right to determine her own destiny and therefore the British had to concede the Indian demand for freedom. The Muslims by the same right put forth the demand for Pakistan and democratically there could be nothing wrong in it. By any definition of a nation they are a distinct nationality in India; and therefore their demand for separate national existence is irresistible. The mere safeguarding of Muslm rights in an Union Constitution would not satisfy the Muslims as a nation.

It is evident that Hindu and Muslim social orders are quite different and distinct. Hindus themselves have made a social division of India. The foreigner who visits India cannot deny the fact that Hindus and Muslims are two nationals. Hindus do not take water and food from Mus-

lims and treat them as untouchables; but Muslims do not object taking water or food from Hindus. We notice everywhere in India separate residential localities for Hindus and Muslims. Separte tea stalls are also maintained on stations for Hindu and Muslim communities. In towns and villages Hindu hotels and Muslim restaurants are seperately maintained for respective communities. If anyone travels from North to South and East to West, anywhere throughout India, he will notice the striking differences in food, dresses, personalities and names of Hindus and Muslims. Colonel M. L. Farrar, who has put in 34 years' service in India observes. "In any town in India a Muslim may live in what is called a Muslim-quarter or a street where a large number of Muslims live, but as often as not he has only to leave his front door to find himself among people whose every thought runs counter to his, whose clothes have a different cut, whose hair is differently trimmed and whose standards and habits and ways of life draw a sharp dividing line between him and them."

Even apart from these outward differences, there are sevaral other deep-rooted differences. There is that emotional brotherhood of Islam which is at least theoretically, if not in fact, capable of inspiring the feeling Islamic unity razing down all social barriers. To Islam, Hinduism is a negation of such brotherhood. Hindus are a caste-ridden society, prohibiting inter-caste dining, inter-caste marriages and in fact prohibiting all social intercouse between communities.

Historically also there is a wide gulf separating the two. In no other country in the world is there to be found such a huge minority as the Muslims are in India. Why should a community of a hundred million strong prefer to be sub-

servient to a distinctly different community? Why should they not evolve a separate nationhood? The common nationality between Hindus and Muslims was never evolved. The two communities would never forget their past; Hindus being proud of Prithviraj Chavan, Shivaji and such other national heroes, who protected Hinduism against the onslaught of Islam while Muslims, on the other hand being proud of their ancensters who established Mohamaden rule in India. Hindus draw their inspiration from Ramayan and Mahabharat while Muslims from their Koran. How is it then possible that these two distinct and different social orders will be united? The forceful union under the name of democracy would be heterogenous. The Western democracy is totally unsuited to India even if provided with safeguards for minorites.

The Simon Commision had admitted the fact that Hindus and Muslims consititute two separate entities. In their Report they stated; "Differences of race, a different system of law and the absence of inter-marriage constitute a basic opposition, manifesting itself at every turn in social custom, and economic competition. They (the Hindus and Muslims) may be said to represent two distinct and separate civilizations." A section of the Hindus itself is commited to the propagation of Hindu nationality as ditinct from Indian nationality. Why, then, not the Muslims? Here is the forceful advocay of Hindu nationalism. Mr. Savarkar, the then Presidednt of the Hindu Mahasabha, speaking at the Ahmedabad session of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, enunciated the "Two-Nation" theory:

> "Several infantile politicians commit the serious mistake in supposing that India is already welded into a harmonious nation, or that it could be welded thus for the mere wish to

do so. These our well-meaning but unthinking friends take their dreams for realities. That is why they are impatient of communal tangles and attribute them to communal organisations. But the solid fact is that the so-called communal questions are but a legacy handed down to us by centuries of cultural, religious and national antagonism between the Hindu and Muslims. When time is ripe, you can solve them; but you cannot suppress that by mearly refusing recognition of them. It is safer to diagnose and treat deep-seated disease than to ignore it. Let us bravely face unpleasant facts as they are. India cannot be assumed today to be an unitarian and homogeneous nation; but, on the contrary, there are two nations in the main, the Hindus and the Muslims in India."

Two years later, at the Calcutta Session of Hindu Mahasabha held in December 1939, Mr. Savarkar, from his Presidential Chair elaborated his thesis of the Hindus being a separate and distinct nation :

"The whole Congress ideology was vitiated ab initio by its unwitted assumption that the territorial unity, a common habitat, was the only factor that constituted and ought to and must constitute a Nation. This conception of territorial Nationality has since then received a rude shock in Europe itself from which it was imported wholesale to India, and the present war has justified my assertion by exploding the myth altogether. All Nations carved out to order on the territorial design without any other common bond to mould each of them into a National being have gone to rack and ruin, tumbled down like a house of cards. Poland, Czechoslovakia will ever serve as a stern warning against any such efforts to frame heterogeneous people into such hotch-potch Nations, based only on the shifting sands of the conception of Territorial Nationality not

cemented by any cultural, racial or historical affinities and consequently having no common will to incorporate themselves into a Nation. These treaty-Nations broke up at the first opportunity they got. The German part of them went over to Germany, the Russian to Russia, Czechs to Chzechs and Poles to Poles The cultural, linguistic, historical and such other organic affinities proved stronger than the territorial ones. Only those nations have persisted in maintaining their national unity and identity during the last three to four centuries in Europe which had developed recial, linguistic cultural and such other organic affinities in addition to their territorial unity or even at times in spite of it and consequently willed to be houmogeneous units — as England, Germany, Italy, Portugal, etc., judged by any and all of these tests which go severally and collectively to form such a homogeneous and organic Nation. In India we Hindus are marked out as an abiding Nation by ourselves. The Hindus are no treaty Nation --but an organic National begin,"

He further says :

"We Hindus, in spite of thousand and one differences within our fold, are bound by such religious, cultural, historcal, racial, linguistic and other affinities in common as to stand out as a difinitely homogeneous people as soon as we are placed in contrast with any other non-Hindu people—say the English or Japanese or even the Indian Muslims. That is the reason why today we, the Hindus from Kashmere so Madras and Sind to Assam wish to be a Nation by ourselves."

When even a majarity community also clamours for a separate nationalism it is but natural that Muslims should aspire to have separate nation-state in India. For without themseles being organised into a separate entity Muslims in India would stand no chance to develop to their full stature

and would always have to play second fiddle. The following extract from the Pirpur Report very clearly depicts the Muslim attitude towards the majority community :

"We in India have been brought up in the traditions of the British parliamentary democracy and the constitution foisted on us is also modelled, more or less, on the British pattern. There is, however, an essential difference between body-politic of this country and that of Britain. The majority and minority parties in Britain are interchangeable : their complexion and strength go on changing with the country. Today a National Government is in power, but the Conservative, Liberal and Labour parties have an equal chace of running the government of the country. Here, in India, we have a permanent Hindu majority and the other communities are condemned to the position of a perpetual minority. Thus it is easy for the majority to assume a non-communal label and do things communal under the cloak of nationalism. The Indian National Congress conception of nationalism is based on the establishment of a national state of the majority community in which other nationalities and communities have only secondary rights. The Muslims think that no tyranny can be as great as the tyranny of the majority and they believe that only that state can be stable which gives equal rights and equal opportunities to all communities no matter how small. They attach great importance to this principle, which alone can safeguard the rights of the Muslims and other minorities."

Let us now consider the case for separate Muslim nationality from economical point of view.

In an undivided India in all aspects of economic enterprise there is Hindu predominance. But under a separate Muslim rule, they can utilize all their economic resources for the uplift of Muslim masses. This can be illuminated by considering the economical position of North-Western Muslim Bloc where Muslims are labourers, agriculturists and debtors while Hindus are landlords and money-lenders and have interest in industries and trade. Most of the trade, such as commision agencies, Banking, Mills and shop-keeping is controlled by Hindus, who exploit North-West. Muslims by securing their raw material at low rates. Muslims are customers and comsume foreign products as well as Indian products manufactured and marketed by Hindus. Thus Muslims are poverty stricken and at the mercy of Hindus. They have to sell their raw material to business magnates who are Hindus, at cheaper rates. The Hindu millowners in Bombay, Ahmedabad and such other cities comling under Hindu majority provinces will try to ban foreign goods or levy duties high enough to enable them to stand competition and thus secure market for themselves. This they will do by exerting pressure on the Central Government, composed of Hindu majority. Consequently the Muslims in N. W. zone will be deprived of their facilities to get the foreign goods at cheaper rates. The goods manufactured by Hindu industrialists will be sold in the Muslim provinces through their Hindu agents or shop-keepers who carry almost all business and trade even in Muslim majority areas. This economic slavery can be smashed only by creating an independent sovereign Muslim State in which Muslims can have opportunites for the betterment of their own community.

Some economists hold the view that economically Pakistan will not be self-supporting as it contains fewer

mines of coal and coke and other mineral products than the rest of India. These mineral products are undoubtedly essential for the development of modern industry. But this argument is not tenable when we take into account other sources from which power can be generated for industrial purposes. Pakistan contains many water-falls from which hydro-electric power can be generated to run its own factories that will be fed by its own raw materials, forest wealth and minerals. Similarly Bengal produces ninety percent of world's jute and out of this nearly eighty percent is grown in the Muslim majority districts of Bengal. All jute mills, however, are situated in Calcutta and are controlled by foreign or Hindu financiers who reap all the profits of this monopoly trade and leave the Muslim peasantry entirely at the merey of the Calcutta business magnates. Under Muslim rule this jute industry will receive specaial protection and jute trade will be diverted from Calcutta to Chittagong which can be developed into an important port and a sea-outlet for the eastern wing of Pakistan.

From the defence point of view Pakistan should be a welcome proposition to the rest of India. The border tribes have always been a headache for the Government of India. Seperation of Muslim provinces would shift the responsibility of dealing with these tribes from the Indian to the Pakistan Government. And that Government is better fitted for dealing with the tribal population. These tribes being Muslim by faith will hesitate before they embark upon what is to-day called "border-raids". India's defence budget always provided for a large expenditure to be incurred in conection with these border incidents. India, excluding Pakistan, will not be required to incur any more expenses on this item.

In the present-set up of world conditions, India divided or not will have to co-operate in a wider international defence organisation and division of India will make no difference.

It is in response to the forgoing arguments that a separate Muslim State of Pakistan was conceded. We shall now consider equally strong arguments that make a case against Pakistan.

Case Against Pakistan.

The advocates of Pakistan hold the view that India is not one country but it is a wrong thesis based on wrong notions. India is geographically, economically, and politically one country and from defence point of view many military experts would treat it as one unit.

India, the great peninsula, has got distinctive natural geographical boundaries on all its sides which separate it from the main continent of Asia. Being a peninsula three of its sides are surrounded by seas and the great mountain-ranges, the Himalayas lie on its north. India has got an area equal to that of Europe excluding Russia. India can geographically be divided into three main parts viz. (1) The Himalaya mountain walls (2) The plain of Hindustan formed by valleys of three great rivers, the Indus, the Ganges and the Brhmaputtra (3) Plateau of peninsular India. The great Himalayas stretch from Afghanistan in the West to Burma in the East, a distance equal from Calais to Constantinople. They are parallel ranges, separated by deep valleys, having a breadth of 2(miles There are six passes across the great barrier of Himalayas.

But simply because of the vastness of its area India cannot be called a sub-continent. China has got a greater land area than India and its population exceeds that of India. The languages in China vary from part to part, though standardization of the same is being tried under China's National Government. Like India it is divided into (1) the lower valley of Hwong Ho (2) the Shantung peninsula (3) the central basins and delta of the Yangatse (4) the upper valley of Yangatze (Red Basin), (5) the valley of the Si Kiang or West River (6) the South Eastern Coast (7) the mountainous West. Russia is also a union of many states and has much wider area. The people speak different languages and belong to different races and culture. An appreciable number of Muslim population is amalgamated in the present U.S.S.R. Both China and Russia are recognised as forming distinct territorial units and not continents. India also cannot be an exception. No modern reasonable strategist in the world would dare advocate that India is a continent. But the old imperialists at different stages raised the question of two nations or even multiple nations in India. In the older days these imperialists condemned the idea of India being a nation but later on they had to face the facts and had to accord recognition to India's unitary nationhood. This change, of course, was mainly due to the wider national awakening in the Indian masses and great national movements of the twentieth century. The earlier imperialists were advocates of India being a conglomeration of nations. Sir John Strachey observed:

> " This is the first and most essential thing to learn about India that there is not and never was an India or even any country of India, possessing according to European ideas, any sort of unity, physical, political, social or religious, no people of India of which we hear so much".

Sir John Seeley states in "The Expansion of England in 1883."

> "The notion that India is a nationality rests upon that vulgar error which political science principally aims at eradicating. India is not a political name but a geographical expression like Europe or Africa; it does not mark the territory of a nation and a language but the territory of many nations and many languages."

Whether India is a "geographical expression" or a political one, the British imperialists were concerned only with the perpetuation of their domination and they would advocate whichever view that served their purpose best. Lord Linlithgow would stress the geographical unity of India while the Cabinet Mission would advocate the unity of India from defence point of view and a year later the British Government itself would sanction India's partition on religious basis. But the fundamental fact remains, as one writer observes that,

> "India, beyond all doubt possesses a deep underlying fundamental unity, far more profound than that produced either by geographical isolation or by political suzerainty. The unity transcends the innumerable diversities of blood, colour, language, dress, manners and sect."

There are diversities of religion, languages and social customs in India. But these do not go to constitute different nations as we shall presently see.

RELIGION.

The Hindus and Muslims in India follow two different religions which have formed the social structure of their lives. The British imperialists were thoroughly aware of this difference which is one of the most important factors which

led them to pursue the policy of 'Divide and Rule'. Lt. Col. Coke instructs, "Our endeavour should be to uphold in full force the (for us fortunate) separation which exists between the different religions and races, not to endeavour to amalgamate them. Divide et impera, should be the principle of Indian Government."

Misleading conceptions about religion were used as a weapon to secure partition of this country. But religious tolerence in India is a characteristic of the people and it neither sprang from logical reasoning nor from mere dictate of the social expediency but originated in the sympathetic and kind hearts of the people. It might have forbidden inter-marriage or inter-dining with another sect but it never raised the question of superiority of one creed over another. The relation between different schools of philosophy are so cordial and harmonious that nowhere in the world these were ever witnessed as in India. In pre-British period India was a remarkable illustration of the fusion of Hindu and Muslim religions though some of the religious rights and customs differed materially, such as the simplicity inside the Muslim mosque in contrast with the pomp and show of worship and decoration in the Hindu temple. Such contrast is also observed in Churches of the Protestants and Catholics. The Protestant church has only prayer-seats and a pulpit for the preacher; whereas the Church of Roman Catholic is decorated with paintings, candles and other pictursque decorations. But unlike India, the followers of these two sects of Christianity perpetrated atrocities against one another all over Europe. Mr. Count Cavour states as follows :

> "The state church in Ireland remains to the Catholics a representative of the cause of their miseries, a sign of defeat

and oppression. It exasperates their sufferings and makes their humiliation more keenly felt."

Wildest atrocities were perpetrated by the Protestants against the Catholics in the name of religion. The Protestants also suffered under rulers of different faith. For example, Queen Mary burnt the Protestants while Queen Elizabeth and Cromwell killed Roman Catholics. The great patriot and poet, Mr Spencer, was the bitter enemy of Ireland while to the English he was a great poet and patriot. Alva massacred and tortured Lutherans and Calvinists. Calvinists murdered Free-Thinkers. In England itself political disabilities were imposed on Catholics. The sacramental Test was in force till 1828 and it required the taking of the sacramental oath according to the rites of Church of England as a qualification for service in municipalities and other public bodies. This excluded the Catholics from public services. They were also deprived of Parlimentary franchise in England. The words "On the true faith of a Christian" were enforced in place of sacremental test which was removed in 1828. But the Jews were not benefitted by this. In 1829 Relief Bill was passed which removed all political and social bans on Catholics whereby they were admitted to either House of Parliament in England and Ireland. For the simple affirmation of usual oath the Quakers and Moravians and Separatists were given facilities to enter Parliament. In 1845 the Jews were for the first time admitted to the Municipal corporation and afterwards in 1858 the Jewish Relief Act admitted them to Parliament.

With all their past bitterness, the Protestants or the Catholics in England do not claim a separate nationality. For history has proved that nations built on religion will not sus-

tain longer. States based on religion will put the clock back in the process of history. Such nations will be ruled by the feudal elements and the theocratic hierarchy and thereby will give rise to unrest among the peasantry, the workers and middle classes. Under these circumstances the ruling classes who showed so much sympathy for their co-religionists will forget their religious zeal and will declaim from house-tops the necessity of distinguishing politics from religion and then disillusionment will come to the Muslim masses. They will realize that they were duped in the name of religion and that their religious sentiments were exploited to satisfy the ambitions of the Muslim hierarchy who today form the core of the Muslim League leadership. Their real intent is not the establishment of free independent sovereign state to guard the interest of Muslims, but it is to safeguard the interests of their own class. When a clash between the Muslim masses and the governing classses becomes inevitable, it is a foregone conclusion that the latter will be overthrown and religion will not deter the masses from rising in revolt. Muslim masses will have then imbibed the spirit of tolerance so implicitly expressed in the following instructions of Babar, the founder of Moghul Empire to his son Humayan:

> "Oh Son! the kingdom of India is full of different religions. Praised be God that He bestowed upon thee its Sovereignty. It is incumbent on thee to wipe all religious prejudices off the tablet of thy heart, administer justice according to the ways of every religion. Avoid especially the sacrifice of the cow by which thou canst capture the hearts of the people of India and subjects of this country may be bound up with Royal obligations.
>
> "Do not ruin the temples and shrines of any community which is observing the laws of Government. Administer justice

in such a manner that the King be pleased with the subjects and the subjects with the King. The cause of Islam can be promoted more by the sword of obligation than by the sword of tyranny.

"Overlook the dissensions of the Shias and the Sunnies else the weakness of Islam is manifest.

"And let the subjects of different beliefs harmonise in conformity with the four elements (of which the human body is harmoniously composed) so that the body of the Kingdom may be free from different dissensions. The memoirs of Timur, the master of conjunctions, (the fortunate,) should always be before thine eyes so that thou mayest become experienced in the affairs of administration."

The Muslims in India are quite influenced by Hindu social customs and laws. For instance the Awans of the Punjab though Muslim by religion have Hindu names and keep their geneology in Brahmanic fashion. Common surnames are also found among Hindus and Muslims, like, Chowdhari, Mian, Malik, Sardar etc. Some Muslims follow Hindu customs of marriage while Hindu laws governing marriage, guardianship and inheritance are applied to some. Thus Mussalmans in India including Pakistan have nothing in common with the Muslim-world outside except their religion. In every other respect they are more related to their Indian brethren than their co-religionists outside. Foreign imperialists have been encouraging fissiparous tendencies for their own imperialist ends and the Muslims in India have unwittingly become their tools in bringing about a division of the county. It is not only in India that the British encourged division. They have divided Irland. They

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had divided Balkan territory and now they are dividing Palestine. We must unmask their selfish policies and despite the difference in religion or race unite the under-dogs, the have-nots of the world.

Languages:

There are different languages spoken in different parts of India and they fall, to speak broadly, into four linguistic families viz. Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Chinese.

1. Indo-European :— The languages in this family include the following: Bengali, Hindustani (including Hindi and Urdu), Gujarati, Rajasthani, Marathi, Panjabi, Sindhi Oria and Assamese.

2. Dravidian :— Languages in this group are generally spoken in South India and include the following: Telugu, Tamil, Malyalam, and Kanarese.

3. Austro-Asiatic :— This group is represented by: Santali Khasia, Bhil, etc.

4. Tibeto-Chinese :— These include the languages and dialects spoken in the Eestern regions of the Himalayas and on India's Eastern frontiers. The important language of this group is the language of Bhutan.

Thus we note that there is a diversity of languages spoken by the people of India. This diversity leads one to the conclusion that India is not a nation but a conglomeration of different nationlities based on different languages. The diversity of the languages has led to the demand of separate autonomous provinces carved

out of the territory where singularity of the spoken languages exist. The Congress also has given recognition to this demand and divided India into separate provinces based on languages, such as, Andhra, Tamilnad, Maharashtra etc.

But the linguistic differences are in no way an obstacle to the building up of one nation. This is an accepted fact proved by the records of history. In U.S.S.R. there are 17 languages for a population of 180 millions. Switzerland contains 71 per cent of its population speaking German, 25 per cent French and 5 per cent Italian. But nobody has ever questioned or ever put forward any claim as to the unitary nationality of these countries. If nations are to be built on languages then England and America would constitute one nation as in both these countries the major language spoken is English. Similarly countries such as South Africa, Australia would have to merge into Anglo-American nation as in these countries English is also the major language.

Urdu is popularly supposed to be spoken by Muslims only. But that is a false notion. Urdu is as much a language of Hindus as that of Muslims and there have been great Hindu writers who contributed to the richness of the Urdu language. Moreover Muslims can have no exclusiue claim over Urdu. In various provinces they even do not understand that language and invariably speak the language of the province. How can they have, then, a special claim for a separate nationaliy on the basis of a separate language?

Now we shall consider the resources of Pakistan.

Resources of Pakistan.

For any State to be economically independent and selfsufficient it requires to contain within its territories some minerals that are important from industrial point of view. India undivided secures a high place in the world regarding her mineral resources distribution of which affects the relationship between various parts of the country and the relationship between India as a whole and the outside world also depends on that distribution. The standard of living of the country relates to the economic development of the country. If the people are well-fed, educated, well-housed and better informed they will become more tolerant and overlook the differences between different castes and religions.

In the modern world the industrial progress of the country depends on the trinity of coal, iron and oil. Especially the latter two are most important in the modern machinery-age. The country possessing these mineral products finds no obstacles in the advancement of its industries. India has no abundant oil suply but she possesses deposits of coal, iron, several of the ferro-alloys, which make good steel mangenese ore, chrom ore, gold and bauxite, and the subsidiary minerals in ample quantity. This mineral wealth enables India to be a sufficiently self-supporting nation but as the country is divided today it is necessary to consider the mineral wealth distributed in Pakistan.

Coal, a most important and valuable mineral is deposited in small quantities in Muslim Punjab and Baluchistan. The coal-fields of Bengal do not go to Muslim Bengal. There are big coal deposits in Bihar, and Orissa. In view of the economists India is fortunate in having coal and iron deposits side by side. There are small iron deposits in West-

tern Punjab. The mineral oil is found to some extent in Muslim Punjab, Baluchistan and N.-W.F.P. Thus Pakistan would be deprived of the vital mineral resources and hence could not be possibly highly industrialised. It will have to look to 'Hindustan' for these resources. The total value of undivided India's products in 1938 was Rs. 15,38,50,000, out of which Rs. 76,17000 or 4.3 per cent. was from Western Provinces of Pakistan. The Eastern Provinces contributed nothing. In short 'Hindustan' possesses great resources of iron, coal and ferro-alloys metal which might be complemented by import of others. On the contrary Pakistan has got small deposits of iron, coal and ferro-alloys. It has much of oil which may bring some economic life to Pakistan. Hindustan and Pakistan are inter-dependent economically. In support of this view Prof. Behre has stated at the conclusion of his report of the economic survey of India:

> This report does not pretend to assess the responsibility for the delay in the settlement between India and Great Britain, any more than it wishes to belittle the importance to the peoples of India of their religious values. It notes merely that from the point of view of mineral resources the Hindu and Muslim areas of India are intimately intergrown and are also interdependent economically. It urges political interdependence is a wise solution where economic interdependence is so intimate and so essential. It implies that the Muslim sections of India would have more to lose than the Hindu sections if a separation by states on religious lines were carried out. And it suggests finally that the economy of India as a whole is interdependent with that of other parts of Asia."

A similar conclusion is reached by Sir Homi Mody and Dr. John Matthai who write:

India satisfies the requirements of an optimum unit for economic development in terms of area, population and resources more than any other single country in the world except the United States of America and Soviet Russia..... Division of India would weaken both Pakistan and Hindustan but the former would suffer more than the latter in respect of mineral resources, lacking coal and iron and ferro-alloys, the position of Pakistan in respect of both zones would be substantially weaker and she would lack the necessary mineral base for large-scale industrial development which is so essential for her future progress.

"The Muslim zones have one great advantage. The hydro-electric survey of India shows the probable minimum continuous water-power available in Pakistan to be 2877 thousand kilowatts; 1084 thousand in the Eastern Zone and 1793 thousand in the Western Zone; while in Hindustan it would be only 1343 thousand kilowatts."

Industries and Factories:

As Pakistan is deficient in mineral resources, especially in that of coal and iron, the industrialisation outlook is gloomy one. It will have chiefly to depend on the neighbouring country, Hindustan which is rich in mineral resources as ninety per cent of her coal and ninety-two per cent of iron is produced in it and the remaining is distributed in Pakistan. Naturally Pakistan will be considerably less industrialised. There are in the Western part of Pakistan fifteen per cent. of the seasonal and 97 per cent. perennial industries. The seasonal industries' employees number 15 per cent. and perennial four per cent. of those employed in factories all over India. Only six per cent. labour is

employed in Pakistan factories of the total employed in British India. In the Eastern Zone Jute is produced on a very large scale, but Jute Mills are located around Calcutta on the banks of the Hughli river running in Hindu Province. There are only seven textile Mills in Muslim Zone and twentythree in the rest of Hindu Bengal. All other important industries including iron and steel are situated outside Muslim Zone (Eastern part of Pakistan). Rice Mills and Jute presses are spread all over the province. All the Government owned factories such as arsenal factories, railway work-shops, and printing presses etc. are situated in Calcutta and its suburbs. Thus it can be ascertained that despite the satisfactory figures regarding industries of Bengal as a whole the territories predominantly Muslim have comparatively very small proportion of factories. So this Eastern arm of Pakistan is likely to be paralysed so far as industries are concerned. Prof. Coupland has put it as follows: "Bengal as it is now, with twenty per cent. of the population of British India, possesses (on the basis of average number of workers employed in factories) thirtythree per cent. of its industry. In Eastern Bengal without Calcutta, the percentage of British Indian industry falls to 2.7."

The Western part of Pakistan contains 1. 175 per cent. number of factories, including those belonging to Government. The factories belonging to private parties are smaller than those in British India as a whole. The total number of factories obtained in British India number 10,466 having 17,51,137 employees. There are no other private big industries in the Punjab and Sind except cotton-ginning, which give employment to many workers. The Government factories such as ordnance, railway work-shops are big and give employment to a number of persons. Thus it can be con-

cluded that the Pakistan State, brought into existenceby the Mountbatten Plan, is unsatisfactory as regards factories, industries and minerals. The result may create possibility of encroachment on the neighbouring Indian Union. This would result in constant frictions with each other destroying the economic strength of both the States in India. The effect would be that capitalist nations such as Britain and America would find flourishing markets in India as well in Pakistan. If United India would have been retained by British diplomats they would have lost the Indian markets. The approximate number of population of the Pakistan State would be 26.7 per cent. of the total population of British India and the number of industries is only 13. 9 per cent. Prof. Charles Behre in his report states that Joint Stock Companies registered 33,93 crores of rupees, paid-up capital by cotton mills owned by private parties. This does not include the paid-up capital of Companies registered in foreign countries. Similarly the Jute Mills' paid-up capital is Rs 19,98 crores of rupees excluding the paid-up capital of Companies registered in foreign countries. All these cotton and Jute mills are situated in Hindustan and very few are in Pakistan.

Pakistan was a demand mainly put forth by Muslim bourgeoisie for the promotion of their class interest. For in a united India their Hindu rivals would wield a great influence over the State. In a seperated territory Muslim financiers and capitalists would get all facilities they wanted but the condition of the masses would remain the same–nay even worsen. For Pakistan independently cannot make great strides in industrial advancement as Pakistan and Hindustan are both economically interdependent. As Prof. Behre observes:

"The pressure of industrialisation is a pressure for unity, in India as elsewhere. But does India want industrialism?... Among the things in the Indian village which it would seem difficult for anyone to overlook from any angle is poverty..... A possible form of amelioration is certainly the manufacture on a grand scale af consumer goods, wherby prices may be lowered and purchasing power increased. Industrialisation, if not the trigger by which this happy result can be assured, is at least one means that may be used, once the desirability of it is recognised. The war has given a tremendous impetus to the process of industrialisation of India, and, although, the history of industrialism is still in its early chapters, there is nothing in the record of man's experience with this unruly genie.....to suggest that once unloosed it can never be bottled again. India not only has coal and iron for the machine. She has a superabundance of the final resource on which the machine is based–manpower. And the distinguishing characteristic of India's immense manpower is its low per capita consumption, in a word, again, its poverty. Given the natural resources, given the manpower, given the need for an increase in the standard of living of the people of India, an increasing degree of industrialisation of India would seem inevitable. India's decision as to the terms of her political future will determine whether that advance toward industrialism is relatively easy or difficult. The experience of "new" and financially weak South American States bears on India's problem. "New" nations, in the process of industrial development, have customarily paid stiff prices in terms of concessions and franchises, for needed capital, when they have been forced to seek that capital from private entrepreneurs. A united India would be in a position to command the sympathy and confidence of other governments, and to ask for loans under interna-

tional auspices on some such terms as those for which China will ask. But an India, and yet more two Indias, using. newly won sovereignty to erect tariff walls around the national borders, would be a poor economic risk. Possible investers would demand the gambler's percentage. Once committed to a programme of industrialisation, India would rapidly find herself confronted with the problem of controlling the programme in the interest of all her people rather than of a few. the familiar task which has agonised Western Nations for a century and which of course, is already a present component of the Indian situation. Divided into economic fragments, India would find this unavoidable issue doubly painful of solution. In a united India the problem would seem to present the spur urging the country to the higher degree of social consciousness which her friends within and outside would wish. With her coal, her iron, her manpower, India could share Asiatic leadership with China or perhaps assume the outstanding role in the industrial development of Asia. External factors press her toward unity no less than does the logic of her economic resources. Burma, on her Eastern frontier aspires toward nationhood. From Burma, India must have Nickel, Tin, Tungsten, Lead, Zinc and probably Petroleum. Economic relation with Burma would be more fruitful for a united India than for a fragmented one. As China develops her own heavy metal industries in association with her coal deposits in the North East, near the coast, India's iron-ore, travelling by water, will be her most easily transported and least expensive source of supply. The present restrictions of British imperial policy would, however, have to be removed before this inter-development Chinese and indian resources could progress. . . . Chinese leaders have shown statesmanship in recognising that it is to the advantage of China that her great neighbour on the South

be a strong and unified nation, It is likewise to the advantage of Hindus and Muslims within India."

Industrialisation of the country is dependent on its resources spread in its various parts and only a co-ordinated effort can be helpful in lauchning the nation upon a full-fledged and planned industrialisation which alone can raise the present very low standard of living of the people. Any partition of the country is bound to adversely affect and cripple such a co-oridinated effort.

India is an agricultural country and a major proportion of her population depends on agricultural products for its livilihood. About eighty per cent. of population in rural areas whether Hindus or Muslims live on agricultural resources. It is therefore necessary to study the agricultural positlon in the provinces belonginf th Pakistan.

Eastern Pakistan State:—The Estern Pakistan State, excluding Sylhet District, has a total population of 4,09,64,779 and total acreage available for cultivation is 2,39,48,462 which comes to 0. 58 acres per head of the podulation. In spite of the fertile State of the land it does not produce sufficient food, for the Province is the most thickly populated one. The actual area under cultivation is 1,78,33,600 acres which comes to 0. 43 acres per head. Cultivable land yet not under cultivation is 61,14,862 acres which comes to 0. 15 acres per head.

The greater proportion of the cultivable land is already cultivated and only a smaller portion is awaiting cultivation. If all the land is cultivated it would come to 0. 58 acres per head. The population of the Eastern Pakistan State is largely increasing and the agricultural expansion cannot keep pace

with it. The famine of 1943 is a living illustration of its food deficiency and though there were other reasons for the famine its present deficiency cannot be ignored. But the Province does not produce sufficient rice needed for its population. The approximate deficiency in rice for the Province of Bengal is 161 millions of maunds and half of it may be taken as a deficiency for the Muslim Bengal (Eastern Pakistan State). The Pakistan State will require to solve this problem by increasing cultivation; but almost all land is under cultivation as we have seen and a very small portion is left uncultivated. The only way for procuring better food supplies is intensive cultivation by artificial irrigation and import of food-stuffs from outside. Intensive cultivation will reguire a change in the very basis of the present land-tenure system and the Government will have to resort to the abolition of both the zamindari system as well as the very small holdings of the peasant. This revolutionary change and introduction of tractors and use of fertilizers will alone yield substantial results.

The other important item of diet for the people of Bengal is sugar and in this respect the Province is entirely dependent on the rest of India. Bengal comsumes about 13 per cent. of sugar of the total manufactured in India and imported into the country. As against this consumption it produces only 2.8 per cent. of sugar of India's total output. Sugar is the second largest industry next to the textile industry in India. The industry absorbs about 1,20,000 workers exclusive of technicians numbering over 3000 and 20 million cultivators. The total capital investment in the industry is over Rs. 35,000,0000. Thus India is one of the largest sugar producing areas in the world. The total output of sugar in 1945-46 was 1065,000 tons. This

production was possible because of tariff protection offered to the industry by the Government of India. The following figures show the growth of the Sugar Industry.—

YEAR.	Total quantity of sugar	
1935-36	757,218	Tons
1936-37	1,107,167	,,
1937-38	1,230,900	,,
1938-39	1,072,200	,,
1939-40	765,000	,,
1940-41	1,373,400	,,
1941-42	1,268,900	,,
1942-43	941,900	,,
1943-44	1,294,700	,,
1944-45	1,304,000	,,
1945-46	1,065,000	,,

All the sugar factories in India are mainly situated in U. P., Bihar and some parts of Bombay Province. Naturally Pakistan will have to depend for its sugar on 'Hindustan.' In the Punjab, N.-W. F. P. and Sind the total area under sugar-cane cultivation is only 700,000 acres as against 45,000,000 acres under sugar-cane cultivation in the rest of India and even of the former acreage a major portion is in districts which comprise Hindu-Sikh area seceded to 'Hindustan.' Therefore obviously Pakistan will never be self-sufficient as regards sugar and will be always at the mercy of Hindustan.

OIL. (Edible)

Oil is another important item in the diet of the Bengalis. The Province consumes a very large quantity of Mustard Oil; but during the last twenty years the total area under oil

seeds cultivation is reduced to half. The area under cultivation in 1914-15 was 14,59,100 acres and in 1934-35 it was 7,23,800. This Province produced a total quantity of oilseeds to the extent of 2,05,000 tons which yielded 18,65,500 maunds of oil. This comes to about one and quarter seers per head, per year. Generally, per head requirement of oil is 2. 5 tolas per day which comes to 11¦ seers per head per year. The oil deficit, as this calculation shows, is 10 seers per head per year. The Provincial production of oil is only 11 per cent. of its normal requirements. So in respect of oil this province will have to depend on Hindustan.

Pulses :

As regards pulses this Province almost entirely depends on ' Hindustan.' Its deficit in pulses is about 80 per cent. of its normal requirements. These form a daily necessity for an average Bengali and he will not be able to find a suitable substitute for pulses.

Jute :

However, the Province of Bengal enjoys world monopoly in respect of one crop viz. Jute which is a money crop. The Province has a total of 21,54,800 acres under Jute cultivation out of which no less than 20,11,800 acres were cultivated in Eastern and Northern districts of Bengal falling under Muslim Zone (Pakistan). The jute crop being the chief money crop of Bengal, the Bengali peasant is entirely dependent on the prices that are fetched by his jute produce. But the fluctuation in the prices is manipulated by the manufacturers and owners of factories both in ' Hindustan ,

and abroad who are the chief purchasers of jute. At low level prices the Bengali peasant is economically hit hard and his condition becomes very miserable as he has no other means of to find the wherewithals for his living.

We will now consider the agricultural and other resources of the Western Pakistan State. Its food position is comparatively satisfactory. The density of population in this part is 138 per square mile as against 810 per sq. mile in Eastern Pakistan. The total acreage available for cultivation in the Muslim Punjab, Sind, N.-W. F. P. is 5, 13, 15, 570. The figure for Baluchistan is not included in this total but even its addition will not much affect our estimate of the food position in this State. The land actually sown in this part is 2,28,95,041. acres; but land under food-crop is only 1,8o,41,247 acres. Western Punjab is self sufficient in respect of its food-grain requirements and it will be able to make up the deficiency in other provinces of Pakistan. The Punjab and Sind have got extensive systems of irrigation and hence there is ample scope for the expansion of agricultural cultivation. Especially the Muslim Punjab is being irrigated on a very large scale. The total area under irrigation in N.-W. Zone is no less than 61. 4 per cent. of the total area irrigated in Brtish India. The Punjab and Sind have respectively 62.5 and 85.8 per cent. of the total area under cultivation.

The total area under irrigation tn N.-W. Zone is no less than 55.4 per cent. of total area sown in comparison with that of the whole British India which is only 13.4 per cent, of the total area sown.

Cotton :

Besides important food crops cotton is cultivated on a very extensive scale in the Punjab. Taking pre-war figures we find that the Punjab produced 10,17,000 bales (400 lbs each) of cotton in 1939-40, Sind 3,09,000 bales and N.-W. F. P. 3000 bales. The area under cotton cultivation is 35,12,846 acres. This being a money crop it has an important place in the economic life of the people in these provinces. British India produced 33,81,000 bales out of which 13,29,000 bales were produced in Western Pakistan which comes to 39.2 per cent. of the total British India production. Both Sind and Punjab are increasing cotton cultivation every year and produce superior quality of cotton which fetches better prices. But as there are very few textile mills in these two provinces, the cotton crop finds market either in the neighbouring provinces or foreign countries. In respect of cotton Pakistan will be self-sufficient; yet it will have to develop its own textile mills.

In respect of food-stuffs Pakistan can be made self-sufficient. But in respect of other matters Pakistan will have largely to depend on its neighbour State.

Pakistan as it is to-day is based on the two-nation theory. The separate nationality of Indian Muslims is based on their separate religion. The concept of territorial nationality cannot have any place in the two-nation theory. All followers of Islam, wherever they reside, constitute a separate nation. Thus, according to this theory, all Muslims living in the Middle-east will come within the orbit of a single Nation-state. But this idea is hardly likely to find favour with Muslim countries. We have been painfully aware of

the plight of Muslim emigrants during those hectic days of the Khilafat Movement. The neighbour State of Afghanistan banned their entry. Before World War I Turkey was a theocratic State; but on the conclusion of hostilities all the theocratic influence over the State was ruthlessly suppressed and all the institutions representing that influence were mercilessly destroyed. Even the use of Arabic script was banned and it was replaced by the more convenient Roman script. Burqa system—a relic of medieval times and symbolic of women's enslavement—was discouraged. And it was only when Turkey broke through the theocratic shell that she could make great progress in various walks of life Even to-day the common religion of the Middle-East countries does not help to create a feeling of unity among them. Ibn Saud views with disfavour any territorial extension granted to the family Hussein ensconced on the thrones of Amman and Baghdad. Abdulla of Transjordan will be willing enough to extend his influence in Palestine. There is a conflict raging at present between Egypt and Sudan and in case it is not amicably settled there is every chance, to say the least, of its embittering the relations between them. And all of these countries are independently currying favour with one or the other of the Great Powers. The boosted Arab League itself may vanish into thin air at the first sign of any serious danger because of the conflicting interests of its constituent members. Do we not at present witness internal strife in almost all the Muslim countries? And what is significant about these strifes is that they are caused by the conflict between the progressive elements in the country and the reactionary forces that are at present in power—— the former demanding the elimination of all foreign vested interests and the latter trying to preserve them in one form

another so that they themselves may not be ousted from power.

The fear that in a United India Muslim culture will be given no opportunities of development according to its own particular genius is based on inferiority complex. Has not India displayed a unique spirit of tolerance ? We do not have to go very far to prove that the spirit of tolerance was very much evident in India's relations with all her neighbours as well as the immigrant races. Look at the microscopically small community of Parsees in India. They came to India from Iran as a result of persecution in their homeland by Muslims themselves. India offered them a shelter and not a single instance of discrimination against them can reasonably be quoted. The Parsees, an insignificant minority community as they are, never put forth any claim for special privileges and they entertain no fear whatsoever that in a United India their interests will be neglected. The Muslims, as a community next in importance to the Hindus, could have exerted their influence in shaping the destiny of a United India. Fear of oppression by Hindus is largely the result of general backwardness of the community in all walks of life-educational, social, economic and political. But the remedy lies not in perpetuation of that backwardness in a seperate State but in joining hands with the progressive forces in the country with the militant worker in the field and factory to destroy once for all the vestiges of foreign imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie that together keep in economic bondage the millions of Indians irrespective of religion and community.

The defence position of Pakistan is very week and its frontiers are most vulnerable to attack by foreign hostile powers. But for a United India and a strong Central Govern

ment Bengal would fallen a very easy prey to Japanese aggression in 1942. The N.W. frontier tribes will constantly be an insoluble problem to Pakistan. The cry of "Islam in danger" may not always prove effective and helpful especially when we remember that mere slogans do not satisfy the hungers of a starving people or clothe the naked or provide shelter to the houseless. The financial position of Pakistan will be very precarions and it will not be able to offer any financial aid to the tribes. The economy of Pakistan will, moreover, receive a definite setback under the heavy demands of modern armament and the maintainance of a strong Naval and Air Force which she must maintain as a soverign State, will result in lowering the general living standard of the masses.

The partition of the country is artificial and goes against the geography of India. Despite the diversities in religion, culture and langnage, India could have become a mighty nation. It must be recognised as a fact that several nationalities inhabit India. Thus Bengalis, Pujabis, Maharashtrians, Andhrites, all constitute different nationalities, and they must be granted complete autonomy against the background of a strong, democratic United States of India. But to seperate Hindu Bengalis from Muslim Benglis and Hindu-Sikh Punjabis from Muslim Punjabis is a crime against history. This will perpetuate the feelings of hatred and ill will and spell disaster for all India. Bengal has its own culture and so also the Punjab. Such divisions are against the whole trend and development of modern political thought and experience. The victors in World War I carved out new States in the continent of Europe and these provided a fertile soil for discontent leading directly to a yet another global conflict. The tendency among the politically

conscious is towards the formation of larger and larger political units so that by co-operation of these units science can be more usefully harnessed for achieving the ultimate aim of all political organisations — the material and social and cultural wellbeing of the community. Notice, for example, what tremendons progress has the U. S. A. made. If there the fissiparous tendencies had been encouraged and each constituent State allowed to pull its weight in different directions, then there would have been nothing but a history of conflict and civil war and all material progress would have remained a dead letter. The U. S. S. R. also provides a glorious example of what a well-knit, strong, united State can achieve in all walks of life. And yet that State is composed of different nationalitis each having its own history and culture.

The world to-day is on the threshold of a new political era in which the principle of nationalism — the sovereign character of a nation-State — will have to be restricted and some of the functions that were hitherto strictly within the jusisdiction of that sovereignty will have to be handed over to some international or say to some super-national organisation if the peace of the world is to be maintained and all outstanding disputes between different nations are to be settled amicably without recourse to armed conflict. And armed conflict, as we know it today to our cost, once flared up, cannot be localised.

The division of the country thus goes against the trend of history and progressive political thought. Yet the partition of the country has become a living reality today and as such it must be faced. To avert conflict and to march towards progress and prosperity both parts will necessarily have to co-operate in all important matters, especially economic and defence.

CHAPTER. VI

POST-WAR INDIA

1945-1945



Background to the Cabinet Mission:-

Mahatma Gandhi was released from detention on May 6, 1944 on grounds of ill-health. With his release it was thought possible that steps would be taken to end the political deadlock in India and though no altogether new orientation of British policy under war circumstances was thought feasible and under predominantly Conservative regime in Great Britain none could expect for a better deal than the 1942 Cripps proposals, yet the war had begun to take a definite turn in favour of the Allies and, therefore, internal political adjustments, so long delayed, were possible of achievement. Meanwhile, Lord Wavell, the Commander-in-Chief of India, at the time of the Cripps negotiations, had assumed the Viceregal responsi bility (1944). Because of his [illegible] leaders during the Cripps negotiations, [illegible] to grasp the objective political situation in India as well as the psycology of Indian political leaders.

In September, 1944, Mahatma Gandhi in his individual capacity carried on discussions with Mr. Jinnah in order to bridge over the differences between the Congress

and Muslim League ideologies. It was his desire that if he could somehow or other win over Mr. Jinnah and subsequently put forth a joint Congress-League demand, the British Government could be persuaded to agree to it. But the discussions were infructous. Later on war in Europe was coming to an end and with the end of the European war, no one expected the Japanese to hold on for long. Thus the spectre of war was no longer there to prevent any possibilities of peaceful settlement of the Indian problem. Moreover problems of peace after a long drawn out total war of six years were far more difficult to tackle than those of the war itself. There were economic problems clamouring for solution; such as the rising cost of living, labour problem, industrial planning and the most important was the food and cloth problem. These problems were difficult of solution if the people did not whole-heartedly co-operate with the Government and the autocratic Government then in power was fully aware of its weakness because of its intrinsic inability to secure popular support for whatever measures they would adopt to tackle the grave economic problems facing the country. Food situation was deteriorating and famine, greater in its effects than the 1943 Bengal famine, was feared. Therefore, the British Government not only wanted but was even eager to secure co-operation of the Indian political leaders and establish a National Government composed of representatives from major political parties. A year later they almost admitted their anxiety about immediately establishing such a National Government. Sir Pethick Lawrence in a broadcast speech on the 16th May, 1946 declared, ".....We, therefore, attach greatest importance to the setting up at

once of an interim Govt. having the support of the major political parties." Sir Stafford Cripps' realistic admission at a Press conference on the same day was still more frank and indicative of the British Govt.'s desire to wash its hands clean of all the responsibilities in solving post-war problems confronting India "This matter of the Interim Govt." he said, "is of supreme importance because of the enormous tasks facing India at the moment. It is these great tasks and perhaps the greatest of them is to deal with the food situation, that makes it absolutely essential that we should between us arrange a smooth and efficient transition."

So it was with the intention of transferring responsibility of facing a difficult economic problem that the Viceroy Lord Wavell was called to London by the British Government for personal discussions. He left India on March 23, 1945 and after a long stay of two and half months in England he returned to India on June 5. He then announced on June 14 his own plan to solve the political deadlock. He reiterated the British Govt,'s resolve to stand by the Cripps offer and further made the following proposals which are popularly known as the "Wavell Plan" :—

1. A reconstruction of the Executive Council, whereby the Viceroy would select the members from the leaders of the Indian political parties with parity between the caste Hindus and the Muslims.

2. The Viceroy to call for a conference of leading Indian politicians, including the leaders of major political parties in India and ex-premiers of pro-

vinces; to place before them these proposals and invite from the conference a list of names for the Executive Council, retaining unrestricted freedom of choice for himself.

3. The whole Executive Council will entirely be Indian, except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, who would retain his present position as War Minister, essential so long as the defence of India remained a British responsibility.

4. External Affairs, Finance and Home Department to be in charge of Indian ministers.

5. The new re-constituted Executive Council to work within the frame-work of the 1935 constitution. The Viceroy would not be deprived of his veto power; "but it will, of course, not be exercised unreasonably."

6. These proposals not to affect Government's relation with Indian States.

No substantial departure was made in the above plan from the Cripps proposals, but it might be assumed that the Viceroy wanted to work it out sincerely and as an earnest of his sincerity a gesture was made in the form of the release of all the detained members of the Congress Working Committee. On June 25, a conference at Simla was convened by the Viceroy and 21 delegates representing major political parties participated in it. The main business of the conference was to select representative names for the new Executive Council under the Wavell plan. The Viceroy made his selections and showed the Muslim names

to Mr. Jinnah who did not approve of them. The Viceroy saw it fit, thereafter, to annouce that the conference failed in its objective.

The political atmosphere in the country was tense. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes about it in the following propphetic terms: *

" These three years (the detention period of the Congress Working Committee) had been a time of heavy travail for our people and each person we met bore the mark of it on his face. India has changed and under the seeming quiet of the surface there was doubt and questioning, frustration and anger and a suppressed passion. With our release, and the turn events took a change came over the scene. The smooth surface was ruffled and cracks appeared. Waves of excitement passed across the country; after three years of suppression, the people broke through that shell. I have not previously seen such crowds, such frenzied excitement, such a passionate desire on the part of masses of people to free themselves. Young men and women, boys and girls, were afire with the urge to do something, though what they should do was not clear to them. "

This 'frenzied excitement' later resulted in the demonstrations with regard to the Indian National Army trials, R. I. N. mutiny and India-wide idustrial strikes. A year later Mr Attlee declared in allmost identical terms, " I find from our friends in this House who had been out to India and returned, from letters received from English-

* Discovery of India. pp 502-503

men in India of all points of view, complete agreement on the fact that India is to-day in a state of great tension and that this is indeed a critical moment."

In such circumstances only a statesmanlike handling of the situation could avoid the impending storm. Lord Wavell had to continue in his efforts to solve the Indian constitutional deadlock. After the debacle of the first Simla Conference, he announced on August 21, 1945 fresh elections to the Central Legislature then ten years old and Provincial Legislatures to be held after consultation with British Government and the provincial Governors. Soon after, on August 26, 1945 he proceeded to England for fresh consultations with Britain's new Lobour Government which had replaced the former Conservative Government after routing the Coservative Party in general elections to the Parliament. The Labour Party was comitted to the policy of granting independence to India and the Party conference had adopted a resolution for India's independence inspite of the opposition from the Executive Committee. The Labour Govt. therefore had to restate Britain's India policy and implement it without any delay.

On Septemebr, 1945, Lord Wavell returned to India after consultations with the Labour Govt. and three days later broadcast an announcement chief points in which were as follows:-

1. Affirmation of the British Govt's. determination to promote in conjuction with leaders of Indian opinion the early realisation of full self-Government in India.

2. Fresh and immediate elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures and setting up of popular ministries after elections in Section 93 provinces.

3. As a preliminary to setting up a constitution-making body, consultations with representatives of provincial Assemblies if the 1942 Cripps proposals are accepted,

4. Discussion with States' representatives as to the means of their participation in the constitution-making body.

5. To bring in the New Executive Council having the support of the main Indian parties after the results of the elections are known.

Before the resumption of direct official negotiations with Indian leaders an idea was conceived of sending a Parliamentary delegation to India, consisting of all the parties in the Parliament. This delegation was to make unofficial contacts throughout the country and acquire a first-hand information of the Indian problems and later on to make a report to the Parliament of their India tour. This delegation was also naturally entrusted with the work of removing all misunderstandings about British Government's intentions and assure the Indian leaders of their firm resolve to help India attain a status of an independent nation within or without the British Commonwealth of Nations. Thes delegation left England on January 2,1945 and in India they made exhaustive contacts, visiting towns and villages, schools and factories, peasant and clerk. They

also interviewed various Indian leaders and thereby aquired intimate knowledge of India's political difficulties and uncompromising character of divergent views held by political parties in India. The sum total of the impression of their tour convinced them of (1) the unanimous desire of all sections and the parties in India for an immediate declaration of India's independence, (2) the urgency of the economic problems and especially the gravity of the food situation and (3) the necessity of an immediate declaration of Britain's policy. This Delegation left India on February 8, and very soon (February 19) Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India announced the British Govt.'s intention to send out to India a special mission of the British Cabinet Ministers (Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps, and Sir A. V. Alexander.) This Mission was entrusted with the work of carrying on negotiations on behalf of the British Govt. with the Indian leaders with a view to bring about a peacefull and speedy transfer of power and setting up of a machinery to make a constitution for India. The announcement of the Cobinet Mission was definitely indicative of the Labour Govt's impatience of the former policy of their predecessors — a policy of self-Govt. "as soon as possible", "at an early date," "in the near future" and "as soon as practicable". Following the announcement there came Mr. Attlee's historical statement on March 15,1946. This statement is of fundamental character since it laid down some basic principles as a guide to the British Govt.'s approach towards the solution of the Indian problem. Mr. Attlee unequivocably recognised the fact that 'the tide of nationalism is running very fast in India" and "that among Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Marhattas, politicians or civil servants—among all of them—that

conception of nationalism had been growing stronger and stronger and today I think that the national idea has spread right through, not the least perhaps, among some of those soldiers who had done such a wonderful service in the war." Further on in the same statement he said, "It is worth remembering that twice in 25 years India has played a great part in the defeat of Tyranny. Therefore is it any wonder that today she claims— a nation of four hundred million people that twice sent her sons to die for freedom that she should herself have freedom to decide her own destiny ?"

Thus explaining his own reasons for the decisions his Government had taken, he indicated the broad outlines on which the Cabinet Mission would work in India. ;

1. What form of Govt. is to replace the present regime is for India to decide.
2. India has right to decide whether she should remain in British Commonwealth and Empire or fall out.
3. "The minorities should be able to live free from fear. On the other hand we cannot allow a minority to place their veto on the advance of a majority. We cannot dictate how these difficulties shall be overcome. Our first duty is to get machinery (for constitution-making) set up and that is the main purpose of the Ministerial Mission and the Viceory."
4. Formation of an interim Govt. commanding greatest possible support in India.
5. "The statesmen of British India should be able to work out a solution of the problem of bringing

together these great separate parts (the Indian States) and we must see that Indian States find their part in it." Perhaps the most important point in the statment from a nationalist point of view was:

6. "But you cannot make Indians responsible for governing themselves and at the same time retain over here the responsibility for treatment of minorities and powers of intervention on their behalf."

The chief factor behind this official realisation of India's right to self-determination was the gravity of the economic situation in India and British Govt.'s desire to shun all responsibility if economic disaster overtook India. For in the same statement Mr. Attlee says,

"It is a most unfortunate circumstance that just at the time when we have to deal with these great political issues there should be grave economic difficulties. In particular, we have very grave anxiety over India's food supply,"

How grave was the economic situation may be guessed from the following figures from the report submitted to the 22nd Session of the All India Trade Union Congress (1946) by its General Secretary, Mr. N. M. Joshi. He gives the strike figures for war period as follows :-

Year	No. of strikes	No. of workers involved	No. of working days lost.
1940	322	4,52,539	75,77,281
1941	359	2,91,054	33,30,503
1942	694	7,72,653	57,79,965
1943	716	5,25,088	23,42,287
1944	658	5,50,015	34,47,306
1945	848	7,82,192	33,40,892
1946 (9 months, Jan-Sept.)	1466	17,37,462	82,62,356

It will be noted from the above figures that the number of strikes from January to September 1946 was about four times larger than in the whole year of 1940, which witnessed first big strike wave during the war period. The grave economic conditions and especially the very unsatisfactory food position formed a most sombre background to all successive efforts to bring about a settlement of the Indian problem of transferring effective control of Indian affairs to Indian hands. But nevertheless Mr. Attlee's statement of March 15, 1946 is a land-mark in India's constitutional progress, and on the face of it, it appears sincere and realistic. This statement marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of British connexion with India.

Besides predominantly economic factors for the declaration of a new policy towards India there were also some other considerations which forced the pace of the Labour Govt's India policy.

The end of war brought new hopes to the suppressed peoples all the world over. The Atlantic Charter had guranteed to " respect the right of all peoples to choose the from of Govt, under which they will live ", and the United Nations had expressed their wish, " to see sovereign rights restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them. " All the freedom-loving peoples of the world had supported the democratic powers for which the British and American Governments had accepted along with the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic the world leadership to defeat the reactionary forces of German and Italian fascism in Europe and Japanese militarism in Asia. Millions gave their young lives in order that future generations of man-

kind may live in peace. Many more millions had undergone terrible privations for years together so that the democratic powers might ultimately triumph. The colonial peoples of the world had a recognised democratic right to demand the application of the Atlantic Charter to their own countries suffering for centuries past under the old British, French, and Dutch Imperialism. How could they distinguish between British Imperialism and German Nazism? If Germany had no right over her neighbouring territories of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland or France, how could the British claim to have any right to rule over a country five thousand miles away from their shores by no less an autocratic form of Government than the Fascist one? How could France, who was herself unable to protect her freedom from German aggression, reclaim Indo-China? Nor could Holland put forth any claims over her pre-war East-Indies Empire. In all these and other colonial countries there was a mighty upsurge of feelings and desire to break away from Imperial domination and establish their right to "choose the from of government under which they will live," guaranteed by the United Nations. Emaciated post-war imperialisms all the world over, including that of Great Britain, could not ignore this fact and continue any longer her nineteenth century imperial and expansionist policy.

The third factor which helped to change Britain's India policy was her comparatively weakened position at the end of the War. The U. S. A. and the U. S. S. R. had enormously gained in their world position and influence and especially the latter was a menace and headache to Great Britain. Out of the second World War, Britain

emerged a debtor country. The U. S. A. was gaining a dominant position in world trade and this was a serious challenge to a mercantile country like Great Britain whose very existence was dependent on her export trade. She could not, therefore, alienate India and thereby invite continuous conflict and internal disorder in India and consequently a possible loss of her trade in the country in favour of the U. S. A. Britain had reasons to believe that if political concessions were made to India her trade in India had a chance to survive. We know that this was not a vain hope. Indian big business was always ready in its own interest to oblige the British trade as is amply proved by such Indo-British alliances as Birla-Nuffield Tata- I. C. I. (Imperial Chemical Industries). Sirsilk-Lansils Rayon Deal and a number of other deals such as Kirloskar's deals with British Oil Engines (Export) Ltd; etc. ※

Thus it would be seen that militarily, politically, and economically Britain was no longer in a dominant see position to dictate terms to others. This was so much evident that an American Senator had openly suggested the dissolution of Britain as an in dependent country and its incorporation as a unit of the U. S. A.

The British policy in India was to play one comminity against another and retain for herself arbitrary powers but for reasons above-mentioned this policy was changed. Here in the statement of March 15. Mr. Attlee had clearly decalred that it would be inconsistant with the principle of Indian independence to retain powers of interference on

※ For details and nature of such deals see "Indo.British Big Business" a P. P. H. Bombay. publication.

behalf of the minority communities and that, therefore, the adjustment of the minority problem was entirely an Indian responsibility The British Government wanted to refute the charge levelled against her for time and again that the bogey of the communal problem was merely a pretext for delaying India's day of independence and the practical implication of the statement was that India's communal problem would be a problem for India to solve.

The Congress reaction to the statement of the British Prime Minister was a favourable one. The Congress Working Committee appointed a special commttee consisting of the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to negotiate with the Cabinet Mission when it arrived in India. The Congress reacted favourably because it considered the statement to be in concord with all its fundamental constitutional demands which were:-

1. Declaration of immediate independence for India.
2. A federal Central Govetnment with largest possible autonomy for provinces.
3. Minorities to be assured of their fundamental rights with regard to their culture, religion, language, and customs.
4. Redistribution of provinces.
5. Residuary powers to be vested with provinces.

The Muslim League was critical of the Prime Minister's Statement; especially it had reason to be suspicious of Labur Govt.'s attitude towards Indian minority problem because the Statement in unequivocal terms expressed the

Government's unwillingness to confer a veto on minority to block the way of India's constitutional progress. The Muslim League considered this to be a departure from the policy hitherto pursued by the Govt. as laid down in the famous August (1940) declaration in which a settlement of the minority problem was made a condition precedent to all constitutional progress. Nevertheless they also decided to co-operate with the Cabinet Mission in their task of finding a solution for India's dead-lock.

With such favourable background the Mission arrived in New Delhi on March 24, 1946 and the next day Lord Pethick-Lawrenee declared in unambiguous terms the chief purpose of the Mission.

"Our delegation" he stated, "will not be concerned with the question whether India shall determine her destiny—that is already decided —but with how she will decide it." Thus it was made clear that India was free to determine her destiny and where the British Govt. came in the picture was to help India choose the method, the way, which she should adopt in forging that destiny.

The Cabinet Mission first contacted the Indian officialdom-the Viceroy, provincial Governors and members of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Later on they also contacted the leaders of all shades of political opinion in India; the Congress, the League, Sikhs, and also the Indian States. In the first month of their stay in India, the Mission got themselves acquainted with the public opinion in India-official and non-official. The Central and provincial elections had proved beyond doubt that there were only two major political parties in India— the Indian National

Congress and the All India Muslim League and that if an agreement could be obtained between these two parties the constitutional problem in India would render itself easy of solution. Therefore, on April 27, 1946 the Mission stated their intention to hold a tripartite Conference (the Cabinet Mission with the Viceroy, the Congress and the League) and in their letters of invitation to the Presidents of the Congress and the League they suggested to discuss at the conference "the possibility of agreement upon a scheme based upon the following fundamental principles:–

The future constitutional structure to be as follows:

A Union Government dealing with the following subjects: Foreign affairs, Defence and Communications. There will be two groups of provinces, the one of the predominantly Hindu provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim provinces, dealing with all other subjects which the provinces in the respective groups desire to be dealt with in common. The provincial government will deal with all other subjects and will have all residuary sovereign rights.

It is contemplated that the Indian States will take their appropriate place in this structcre on terms to be negotiated with them."

Here in nutshell do we find the lines on which the mind of the Cabinet Misson was working. Here also do we find the genesis of the idea of a separate group of Muslim provinces culminating in the establishment of an independent sovereign state of Pakistan, officially accepted by the British Government. In his reply to this invitation, the Congress president explained the Congress attitude vis-a-vis the "fundamental principles" as enunciated in the

letter of invitation. The Congress stood for the following principles;-

1. A Federal Union of autonomous units.
2. The Union to have executive and legislative machinery as well as the finance relating to these subjects and power to raise revenues for defence and allied purposes in its own right.
3. Union to deal with the following common subject:-

(i) Foreign affairs
(ii) Defence
(iii) Communications
(iv) Currency
(v) Customs
(vi) Tariffs, and "such other subjects as may be found on closer scrutiny to be intimately allied to them."

4. The provinces to have full powers in regard to all remaining subjects as well as the residuary powers.
5. The Indian States should join the Fededral Union as constituent units of the Union for the common subjects mentioned above.

What the Congrss objected to was:-

(1) Compulsory groups of Provinces especially on religious and communal basis

(2) Sub-federations (by creation of compulsory groups of Provinces)within the larger All-India Federal Union.

To create an atmosphere of reality during the negotiations at the conference, the Congress

wanted an immediate declaration of Indian independence and consequent withdrawal of the British Army in India.

The Muslim League reiterated the position it had taken up since the passing of the famous Lahore Resolution (1940) and agreed to participate in the conference without committing itself to any other position. Accordingly the conference was held at Simla on may 5, 1945, the following leaders participating in its deliberations:-

Government representatives:-

1 Lord Pethick Lawrence
Sir Stafford Cripps
3 Sir A. V. Alexander
4 Lord Wavell

Congress representatives:-

1 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
2 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
3 Sardar Vallbhbhai Patel
4 Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan

League representatives:—

1 Mr M. A. Jinnah
2 Nawab Mohamed Ismail Khan
3 Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan
4 Sardar Ab ur Rab Nishtar

The Conference confined itself to the following agenda:-

1. Groups of Provincs:- (a) Composition (b) method of deciding group subjects; and (c) character of Group organization.
2. Union:- (a)Union subjects (b) character of union constitution and (c) finance.

3. Constitution-making machinery:-
 (a) Composition; and
 (b) Functions
 (i) in respect of Union,
 (ii) in respect of Groups and
 (iii) in respect of Provinces.

After a few days of joint deliberations, the Mission thought it fit to commit to writing the basis of agreement between the Congress and the League. In suggesting this basis the Mission was guided by these deliberations in which both the parties took part and expressed their frank views regarding all matters under discussions. They suggested the following points which in their opinion would be the basis of agreement, and communicated these in writing to the Presidents of both the organisations. These points were:

(1) There shall be an All-India Union Government and Legislature, dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights, and having the necessary powers to obtain for itself the finances it requires for these purposes.

(2) All remaining powers shall vest in the provinces.

(3) Groups of provinces may be formed and such groups may determine the provincial subjects which they desire to take in common.

(4) The Groups may set up their own executives and legislatures.

(5) The Legislature of the Union shall be composed of equal proportions from the Hindu majority provinces and from the Muslim majority provinces whether or not these or any of them have formed themselves into groups; together with the representatives of the States.

(6) The Government of the Union shall be constituted in the same proportion as the Legislature.

(7) The constituion for the Union and the Groups–if any–shall contain a provision whereby a province can by majority vote of its Legislative Assembly call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten–yearly intervals thereafter:

For the purpose of such reconsideration a body shall be constituted on the same basis as the original Constituent Assembly and with the same provisions as to voting and shall have powers to amend the constitution in any way decided upon.

(8) The constitution–making machinery to arrive at constitution on the above basis shall be as follows:–

(a) Representatives shall be elected from each provincial Assembly in proportion to the strength of various parties in that Assembly on the basis of 1/10th of their number.

(b) Representatives shall be invited from States on the basis of their population in proportion to the representation from British India.

(c) The Constituent Assembly so formed shall meet at the earliest date possible in New Delhi.

(d) After its preliminary meeting at which the general order of business will be settled it will divide into three sections, one section representing the Hindu majority provinces, one section representing the Muslim majority provinnes and one representing the States.

(e) The first two sections shall then meet separa-

tely to decide the provincial constitutions for their group and if they wish a group constitution.

(f) When these have been settled it will be open to any province to decide to opt out of its original group into the other group or to remain outside any group.

(g) Thereafter, the three bodies will meet together to settle the constitution for the Union on the lines agreed in paragraphs 1 to 7 above.

(h) No major point in the Union Constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed by the Assembly unless a majority of both the two major communities vote in its favour.

(9) The Viceroy shall forthwith call together the above constitution-making machinery which shall be governed by the provisions stated in paragraph 8 above.

These suggestions did not carry much weight either with the Congress or with the League. Both objected to some or other suggestions contained in the above memorandum. For example, the Congress was prepared to modify its ideal of a strong centre in order to meet the demands of the Muslim League; but it objected to the creation of sub-federation or sub-federations in the manner suggested above as that would not be conducive to the evolution of a stronger Centre in future; on the contrarary it would even weaken the already lukewarm Centre. Secondly the Congress was opposed to "parity in executives or legislatures as between wholly unequal groups." Thirdly the Congress wanted the grouping of Provinces to be entirely optional and objected to the compulsory grouping of Provinces. The Congress, on its own part, made the following suggestions:-

1. Planning should be added to the list of the Central subjects. "Planning can only be done effectively at the Centre, though the Provinces or Units will give effect to it in their respective areas,

"The Union must also have power to take remedial action in cases of breakdown of the constitutlon and in grave public emergencies."

2 For the Constituent Assembly elections, the Congress suggested the method of proportional representation by single transferable vote.

It also referred to the vagueness of the State representation but did not press the point. The Congress President, in his letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, dated 9th May, 1946, made repeated suggestions that all the controversial points on which the two parties could not reach agreement should be referred to an independent tribuual. No one would voluntarily put his case before an independent tribunal unless one was convinced of the reasonableness :of one's case, But neither the Mission nor the League would agree to it.

The League had also raised objections to the Mission's memorandum. To the League the addition of "Fundamental Rights" to the Central subjects was a departure from the original formula contained in the letter of invitation to the Conference. It also objected to the setting up of one constitution-making body; although as envisaged in the memorandum, it was later to divide itself into three sections (8,d) for the purpose of making group and provincial constitutions (8,e). On May 12, 1946, Mr. Jinnah, issued the following Memorandum embodying minimum demands by way of an offer to the Congress;-

Memorandum of the Muslim League (12th May, 1946)

1. The six Muslim provinces (the Punjab, N.W.F.P., Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal and Assam) shall be grouped together as one group and will deal with all other subjects and matters except Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications necessary for Defence which may be dealt with by the constitution-making bodies; the two groups of provinces, Muslim provinces (hereinafter named Pakistan Group) and Hindu provinces-sitting together.

2. There shall be a separate constitution-making body for the six Muslim Provinces named above, which will frame constitutions for the group and the provinces in the group and will determine the list of subjects that shall be provincial and Central (of the Pakistan Federation) with residuary powers vesting in the provinces.

3. The method of election of the representatives to the constitution-making body will be such as would secure proper representation to the various communities in proportion to their population in each province of the Pakistan-group.

4. After the constitution of the Pakistan Federal Government and the provinces are finally framed by the constitution-making body, it will be open to any province of the group to decide to opt out of its group, provided the wishes of the people of that province are ascertained by a referendum to opt out or not.

5. It must be open to discussion in the joint constitution-making body as to whether the Union will have a Legislature or not. The method of providing the

Union with finance should also be left for decision of the joint meeting of the constitution-making bodies but in no event shall it be by taxation.

6. There should be parity of representation between the two groups of provinces in the Union Executive and the Legislature if any.

7. No major point in the Union constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to have passed in the joint constitution-making body unless the majority of the members of the contitution-making body of the Hindu provinces and the majority of the members of the constitution-making body, of the Pakistan-group, present and voting, are separately in its favour.

8. No decision, executive or administrative shall be taken by the Union in regard to any matter of controversial nature except by a majority of three-fourths

9. In group and provincial constitutions, fundamental rights and safeguards concerning religion, culture and other matters affecting the different communities will be provided for.

10. The Constitution of the Union shall contain a provision whereby any province can by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution and will have the liberty to secede from the Union at any time after an initial period of ten years.

These are the principles of our offer for a peaceful and amicable settlement and this offer stands in its entirety and all matters mentioned herein are inter-dependent,

The Congress explained its position in regard to the above memorandum and replied it point by point as follows:–

The approach of the Muslim League is so different from that of the Congress in regard to these matters that it is a little defficult to deal with each point separately without reference to the rest. The picture as envisaged by the Congress is briefly given in a separate note. From consideration of this note and the Muslim League' proposals the difficulties and the possible agreement will become obvious

The Muslim League's proposals are dealt with briefly below:–

1. We suggest that the proper procedure is for one Constitution–making body or Constituent Assembly to meet for the whole of India and later for groups to be formed if so desired by the Provinces concerned. The matter should be left to the Provinces and if they wish to function as a group they are at liberty to do so and to frame their own constitution for the purpose.

In any event Assam obviously has no place in the group mentioned and the N. W. F. P., as the elections show, is not in favour of this proposal.

2. We have agreed to residuary powers, apart from the Central subjects, vesting in the provinces. They can make such use of them as they like, and as has been stated above, function as group. What the ultimate nature of such a group may be cannot be determined at this stage and should be left to the representatives of the provinces concerned,

3. We have suggested that the most suitable method of election would be by single transferable vote. This would give proper representation to the various communities in proportion to their present representation in the Legislatures. If the population proportion is taken, we have no particular objection, but this would lead to difficulties in all the provinces where there is weightage in favour of certain communities. The principle approved of would necessarily apply to all the provinces.

4. There is no necessity for opting out of a province from its group as the previous consent of the province is necessary for joining the group.

5. We consider it essential that the Federal Union should have a Legislature. We also consider it essential that the Union should have power to raise its own revenue.

6 & 7. We are entirely opposed to the parity of representation as between groups of provinces in the Union Executive or Legislature. We think that the provison to the effect that no major communal issue in the Union Constitution shall be deemed to be passed by the Constituent Assembly unless a majority of the members of the community or communities concerned present and voting in the Constituent Assembly are separately in its favour, is a sufficient and ample safeguard of all minorities. We have suggested something wider and inoluding all communities than has been proposed elsewhere. This may give rise to some difficulties in regard to small communities, but all such difficulties can be got over by reference to arbitratian. We are prepared to consider the method of giving effect to this principle so as to make it more feasible.

8. This proposal is so sweeping in its nature that no Government or Legislature can function at all. Once we have safeguarded major communal issues other matters, whether controversial or not, require no safeguard. This will simply mean safeguarding vested interests of all kind and preventing progress or indeed any movement in any direction. We, therefore, entirely disapprove of it.

9. We are entirely agreeable to the inclusion of Fundamental Rights and safeguards concerning religion, and like matters in the Constitution. We suggest that the proper place for this is the All-India Federal Union Constitution. There should be uniformity in regard to to these Fundamental Rights all over India.

10. The constitution of this Union will inevitably contain a provision for its full reconsideration at the end of ten years. The matter will be open then for its complete reconsideration. Though it is implied, we would avoid reference to secession as we do not wish to encourage this idea.

Apropos of the expression of opinion on the League Memorandum the Congress made its own suggestions for the settlement. They were:-

1. The constituent Assembly to be formed as follows:-

(i) Representatives shall be elected by each Provincial Assembly by proportional representation (single transferable vote). The number so elected should be one-fifth of the members of the Assembly and they may be members of the Assembly or others.

(ii) Represntatives from the States on the basis of their population in proportion to the representaion

British India. How these representatives are to be chosen is to be considered later.

2. The Constituent Assembly shall draw up a constitution for the Federal Union This shall consist of an All-India Federal Government and Legislature dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights, Currency, Customs and Planning, as well as such other subjects as on closer scrutiny, may be found to be ultimately allied to them. The Federal Union will have necessary powers to obtain for itself the finances it requires for these subjects and the power to raise revenues in its own right. The Union must also have power to take remedial action in cases of break-down of the constitution and in grave public emergencies.

3. All the remaining powers shall vest in the Provinces. or Units.

4. Groups of provinces may be formed and such groups may determine the provincial subjects which they desire to take in common.

5. After the Constituent Assembly has decided the consitution for the All India Federal Union as laid down in paragraph (2) above, the representatives of the provinces may form groups to decide the provincial constitutions for their group and, if they wish, a group constitution.

6, No major point in the All India Federal Constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed by the Constituent Assembly unless a majority of the members of the community or communities concerned present in the Assembly and voting are separately in its favour. Provided in case there is no agreement on any such issue, it will be referred to arbitration. In

case of doubt as to whether any point is a major communal issue, the Speakar will decide, or if so decided, it may be referred to the Federal Court.

7. In the event of a dispute arising in the process of constitution-making, the specific issue shall be referred to the arbitration.

8. The constitution should provide machinery for its revision at any time subject to such checks, as may be devised. If so desired, it may be specifically stated that this whole constitution may be reconsidered after ten years.

From these detailed views of the three parties to the Second Simla Conference it would be noted that the chief points on which the parties could not reach any agreement were ; (1) assignment of common subjects, (2) grouping of provinces and the element of compulsion involved in. the process, (3) parity of representation between two groups of provinces (Hindu Provinces and Muslim Provinces) in the Central Executive and Legislature; and (4) the demand of the Muslim League that "no decesion, legislative, executive or administrative, shall be taken by the Union in regard to any matter of controversial nature, except by a majority of three-fourths". When it became painfully evident that the parties could not reach agreement between themselves and no useful purpose would be served by prolonging the discussions, the Conference was broken up and the Cabinet Mission returned to New Delhi to reconsider the situation. This was the moment of psychological importance for the Mission. To admit failure, like the Cripps Mission in 1942, would have spelt disaster both for

India and Great Britain. To accept the view point of one party as against the other would have betrayed partiality and invited the charge of "Divide and Rule". Moreover they could not neglect the mandate of the British electorate at home. In the post-war conditions they would also not like the Govt. of India to pursue a policy of arrest, imprisonment, detention without trial, mass repression and suppression of civil liberties. This policy would have weakened Great Britain's position at the various international conferences and would have put her in a most embarrassing position. The Mission, under these circumstances,sought to adopt a middle course which would not very much embitter the Indian parties and provoke them to opposition, if not secure their willing approval. And so on May 16, 1946 in a Statment they announced their own plan for the settlement of India's constitutional problem. *

This statement of the Cabinet Mission admitted certain facts of the Indian situation. Thus,it unhesitatingly rejected the idea of division of India into Hindu-India and Muslim-India. The Mission considered it unwise to compel large Hindu and Sikh minorities of about 45 % in Bengal and the Punjab to accept Pakistan as demanded by the Muslim League. It was illogical to expect them to acquiesce in a rule of bare majority when the all-India 25 % Muslim minority was clamouring for the establishment of separate Sovereign Muslim State in India. For defence purposes also a divided India was more vulnerable to enemy attack. So the Statement favoured a Union Centre for all India which

* See Appendix B for the full text of the Statement.

would deal with three subjects only; viz. (1) Foreign Affairs (2) Defence and (3) Communications. To satisfy Muslim aspirations, the Mission grouped the Provinces of India on a religious basis–one group of predominantly Hindu Provinces and the other two on India's North–Western and Eastern boundaries of Muslim Provinces. They also suggested a similar division of the Constituent Assembly to be convened to frame the constitution of free India. The All-India Constituent Assembly after meeting to decide the rules of procedure etc. was to divide itself into three sections A., B., and C., corresponding to three groups of provinces and decide the Provincial constitutions for provinces in each group and if desired the group constitutions also. The States were also invited to join the Constituent Assembly and determine their future relationship with free India.

The experience of the British statesmanship for the last two hundred years, right from Robert Clive to Leopold Amery. has all along been a bitter and discourageous one. The Indian leaders could hardly be expected off-hand to give a cheering response to this statement. Every word of it was scrutinized, explanations sought for and personal discussions entered into for clarification of vague points. And yet the general reaction in the country was one of halting favour and very few leaders and parties advocated wholesale rejection and condemnation of it. Mahatma Gandhi eulogized the Mission's plan which in his opinion contained the seed to convert "this land of sorrow into one without sorrows and sufferings."

The Muslim League's immediate reaction was critical of the plan. Thus, Mr. Jinnah, on 22nd

May, 1946, observed " I regret that the Mission should have negatived the Muslim demand for the establishment of a complete sovereign state of Pakistan which we still hold is the only solution of the constitutional problem of India....." Further in the same speech he pointed out that while the Leauge demand was for one soverign Muslim State the Mission's Statement envisaged a division of Muslim Provinces into two sections. The League was also opposed to one constitution-making body. Besides these the other objections were, in Mr, Jinnah's words, " (1) There is no indication at all that the communications would be restricted to what is necessary for Defence nor is there any indication as to how this Union will be empowered to aid the finances required for these three subjects while our view was that finace should be raised only by contribution and not taxation." (2.) The Statement provided for a Union Executive and Legislature while the League view-point was that " (a) there should be no Legislature for the Union but the question should be left to the Constituent Assembly to decide. (b) That there should be parity of representation between the Pakistan-group and the Hindustan-group in the Union Executive and Legislature, if any, and (c) that no decision, legislative, executive or administrative should be taken by the Union in regard to any matter of a controversial nature except by a majority of three-fourths. All these three terms of our offer have been omitted in the Statement."

Mr. Jinnah also complained that whereas the League demanded a right to secede from the Union after an initial period of ten years, the Statement only provided for the

re-consideration of the terms of the Union Constitution after that period.

The Congress Working Committee in their resolution of May 24, 1946 refrained from giving a final opinion on the statement and sought for a "full picture", and some clarifications. The Constituent Aseembly, in the opinion of the Congress, must be an entirely sovereign body whereas the Statement contained certain recommendations and suggested certain procedures which were rather of an obligatory character. The Congress view was that it was open to the Constituent Assembly to make any changes and variations in the procedure, "with the proviso that in regard to certain communal matters a majority decision of both the major communities will be necessary." The resolution pointed out a glaring contradiction in the Statement with regard to provincial groups. The Mission had given unflinching support to the basic principle of Provincial Autonomy and residuary powers vesting in the provinces in their Statement: (paragraph 15 (5) and (3). But this provision had been nullified by paragraph 19: (5) by which groups of provinces (A.,B..C.,) were required to proceed to settle the provincial constitutions for the provinces in each section", and also a group constitution if the particular section so decided. The right to opt out of a particular group was given to a province after its constitution was framed by the section to which it belonged and new legislature was formed under that constitution. Thus there was a measure of initial compulsion on a province to join the group in which it was placed in the Statement even if that province had no desire to do so. This clearly was an infringement of the basic principle of provincial autonomy and introduced a certain measure of

contradiction in the Statement. The Congress Working Committee, therefore, interpreted paragraph 15 to mean that, "in the first instance, the respective provinces shall make their choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed." The resolution also placed on record its views on the provision in the Statement with regard to the Indian States and considered it vague and desired that "the manner of appointing State representatives for the Constituent Assembly must approximate, in so far as is possible, to the method adopted in the provinces." As regards the provisional arrangement for the National Government the Committee regretted that "there is no vital change envisaged during the interim period when the Provisional Government will function inspite of the assurance given in paragraph 23 of the Statement." It further stated that 'if independence of India was aimed at, then the functioning of the Provisional Government must approximate closely in fact even though not in law, to that independence, and all obstructions and hindrances should be removed. The continued presence of a foreign army of occupation is a negation of independence."

The Committee raised no objection to the continuance of the Governor-General as the head of the Government during the interim period but it wanted that "the (Provisional) Government should function as a Cabinet responsible to the Central Legislature."

Thus briefly stating their reaction to the Statement of May 16,1946, the Working Committee of the Congress delayed giving its final opinion pending clarifications of issues raised in their resolution on the Statement. The

Congress as well as the League sought for clarifications and the Cabinet Mission explained their Statement in the light of the Congress and League criticisms on May 25,1946. The Congress wanted the Constituent Assembly to be an entirely sovereign body. The Mission gave the assurance that " once the Constituent Assembly is formed and working on this basis, there is no intention of interfearing with its discretion or questioning its labours ." They further stated that, "His Majesty's Government will recommend to Parliament such actions as may be necessary for the cession of soverignty to the Indian people, sujeet only to two matters which are mentioned in the Statement and which we believe are not controversial, viz. adequate provision for the protection of minorities (Paragraph 20 of the Statement) and willingness to conclude a treaty with His Majesty's Government to cover matters arising out of power (paragraph 22 of the Statement)". The Mission then explained that the European representation in the Constituent Assembly was the consequence of the system of election as existing and it was for Europeans to decide whether or not to exercise the right to elect their representatatives to the Indian Constituent Assembly. As for Baluchistan and Coorg arrangements were being made to secure only elected represntatives from those parts. As for the States' representation it was a matter between the States and the States Negotiating Committee of the Constituent Assembly. The Delegation did not agree with the Congress interpretation as embodied in their resolution of May 24, on the Grouping clause in paragraph 15 of the original Statement of May 16, 1946 and declared that this interpretation "does not accord with the Delegation's intentions." They stated that, " This (grouping) is an

essential feature of the scheme and can only be modified by agreement between the parties." This was a clear indication that so long as this agreement was not obtained, the grouping of provinces was to be compulsory and provinces could only opt out after a majority vote in the provincial legislature under the new constitution framed by the whole group. As for the new Interim Govt. the Delegation stated that, "All portfolios including that of the War Member will be held by Indians; and that the members will be selected in consultation with the Indian political parties." But they explained that, "as the Congress statement recognises, the present constitution must continue during the interim period and the Interim Govt. cannot therefore be made legally responsible to the Central Legislature." As regards the Congress objection to the retention of British troops in India they stated that "troops will not be retained against the will of an independent India but during the interim period, which it is hoped will be short, the British Parliament has, under the present constitution, the ultimate responsibility for the seeurity of India and it necessary therefore that British troops should remain."

Other Reactions to the Statement.

: Sikhs Reject the Scheme :

A representive gathering of the Sikhs at Amritsar, from the Punjab, N.W.F.P,. Delhi and the United Provinces passed a resolution on June 9, 1946 denouncing the Cabinet Mission's proposals of May 16. Their reasons for rejecting the proposals were chiefly as follows:-

1. By compulsory grouping of provinces the position of the Sikhs has been adversly affected.

2. The Mission was very keen on seeing to it that political and social life of the Muslim community might not become submerged in a purely Unitary India in which by virtue of their majority Hindus will be predominant. But when the Mission came to deal with the problem of Sikhs, they showed utter lack of consideration of their position under a purely Muslim Rule.

3. The Advisory Committee to be set up by the Constituent Assembly will be wholly ineffective to safeguard the just rights of the Sikhs.

4. The Mission have made provision for the protection of the rights and intersts of the Hindus and Muslims in regard to major communal issues. But they have made no such provision for the protection of the rights and interests of the Sikhs either in the Union or the Provincial sphere.

After aceording these reasons the resolution stated: "This Panthic gathering expresses its strong condemnation of the recommendations of the Cabinet Mission and declares that they are wholly unacceptable to the Sikhs. This gathering further affirms that no constitution will be acceptable to the Sikhs which does not meet their just demands and is settled without their consent."

The other parties, such as the Sikhs, the Communists, Hindu Mahasabha etc. rejected the Mission's Statement, each for its own reasons. But inspite of their opposition the Congress and the Muslim League finally decided to accept it. On June 6, 1946, the Council of All-India Muslim League passed a resolution accepting the Statement. After pointing out the defects in the Statement from the League point of view, the Resolution stated:-

"In order that there may be no manner of doubt in any quarter the Conncil of the All India Muslim League reiterates that the attainment of the goal of complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims of India for the achievement of which they will, if necessary, employ every means in their power and consider no sacrifice or suffering too great.

"That, notwithstanding the affront offered to the Muslim sentiments by the choice of injudious words in the preamble of the Statement of the Cabinet Mission, the Muslim League, having regard to the grave issues involved, and prompted by its earnest desire for a peaceful solution, and inasmuch as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan are inherent in the Mission's plan, by virtue of the compulsory grouping of the six Muslim Provinces in sections B and C, is willing to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed in the Scheme outlined by the Mission's in the hope that it would ultimately result in the consummation of the goal of independence for the major nations, Muslim and Hindus and all the other peoples inhabiting the vast sub-continent

"It is for these reasons that the Muslim League is accepting the Scheme and will join the Constitution-making body and will keep in view the opportunity and the right of secession of province or groups from the Union which have been provided by the Mission's plan by implication. The Muslim League also reserves right to modify and revise the policy and attitude set forth in this resolution at any time during the progress of deliberations of the constitution-making body or the Constituent Assembly or thereafter if the course of events so

require bearing in mind the fundamental principles and ideals hereinbefore adumbrated to which the Muslim League is irrevocably committed.

"That with regard to the arrangement for the proposed Interim Government at Centre, this Council authorises its President to negotiate with H. E. the Viceroy and to take such decisions and actions as he deems fit and proper."

The Congress Accepts the Statement:

After a series of correspondance and interviews for ellucidation of the Statement and certain of its clauses, the Congress Working Committee passed the following Resolution:–

On May 24, the Working Committee passed a resolution on the Statement dated May 16, issued by the British Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy. In this Resolution they pointed out some defects in the Statement and gave their own interpretation of certain parts of it.

Since then the Committee have been continuously engaged in giving earnest consideration to the proposals made on behalf of the British Government in the Statements of May 16 and June 16 and have considered the correspondence in regard to them between the Congress President and the Members of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy.

The Committee have examined both these sets of proposals from the point of view of the Congress objective of immediate independence and the opening out of the avenues leading to the rapid

advance of the masses, economically and socially, so that their material standards may be raised and poverty, malnutriion, famine and the lack of the necessaries of life may be ended, and all the people of the country may have the freedom and opportunity to grow and develop accroding to their genius. These proposals fall short of these objectives. Yet the Committee considered them earnestly in all their aspects bacause of their desire to find some way for the peaceful settlement of India's problem and the ending of the conflict between India and England.

The kind of independence Congress has aimed at is the establishment of a united, democratic Indian federation, with a central authoritty, which would command respect from the nations of the world, maximum provincial automomy, and equal rights for all men and women in the country. The limitation of the Central authority as contained in the proposals, as well as the system of grouping of provinces weakened the whole structure and was unfair to some provinces such as the N.W.F. Province and Assam, and to some of the minorities, notably the Sikhs. The Committee disapproved of this. They feft however, that, taking the proposals as a whole, there was sufficient scope for enlarging and strengthening the Central authority and for fully ensuring the right of a province to act according to its choice in regard to grouping, and to give protection to such minorities as might otherwise be placed at a disadvantage. Certain other

objections were also raised on their behalf notably the possiblity of non-nationals taking any part in constitution-making. It is clear that it would be breach of both the letter and spirit of the Statement of the May 16 if any non-Indian participated in voting or standing for election to the Constituent Assembly.

In the proposals for an Interim Govt. contained in the Statement of June 16 the defects related to matters of vital concern to the Congress. Some of these have been pointed out in the letter dated June 25 of the Congress President to the Viceroy. The provisional Govt. must have power and authority and responsibility and should function in fact, if not in law, as a de facto independent Govt. leading to the full independence to come. The members of such a government can only hold themselves responible to the people and not to any external authority. In the formation of a provisional or other Govt. Congressmen can never give up the national character of the Congress, or accept an artificial and unjust parity, or agree to the veto of a communal group. The Committee are unable to accept the proposals for the formation of an Interim Govt. as contained in the Statement of June 16.

The Committee have, however, decided that the Congress should join the proposed Constituent Assembly, with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India.

While the Committee have agreed to the Congress participation in the Consituent Assembly, it is in their opinion essential that a representative and responsible provisional National Government be formed at the earliest possible date. A continuation of authoritarian and unrepresentative Government can only add to the sufffering of famishing masses and increased discontent. It will also put in jeopardy the work of the Constituent Assembly, which can only function in a free environment.

The Working Committee recomended accordingly to the All India Congress Committee and for the purpose of considering and ratifying this recommendation they convene an immergent meeting of the A.-I.C.C. in Bombay on July 6 and 7. "

Accordingly the A.-I.C.C. was convened and it endorsed the Working Committee's decision to participate in the long term plan.

With the acceptance of the State paper of May 16, by the Muslim League and the Congress the Government made facilities for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly. Simultaneously along with the announcement of the State Paper attempts were made to form a representative National Government. In the initial stages these attempts were fruitless; but the Viceroy continued in his efforts to form a Nationol Government representing major elements in India's political life and ultimately succeeded in persuading the Congress to accept the administrative responsibility at the Centre under prevailing canditions.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRANSFER OF POWER

In their Statement of May 16, the Cabinet Mission stated: "While the constitution-making proceeds, the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance therefore to the setting up at once of an Interim Government having the support of major political parties." This provinsional Government was to be responsible for the administration of the country until the final consitution was framed by the Constituent Assembly and a new Government establshed in accordance with that Constitution. The Viceroy carried on discussions with the Congress and the Muslim League with a view to facilitate the formation of such a Government. On May 9,1946 the members of the Viceroy's Executiue Council including the Commander-in-Cheif had already placed their respective portfolios at the disposal of His Majesty the King and of the Viceroy in order to facilitate the arrangements for the Interim Government at the Centre. In their statement of May 25.1946 the Mission explained that though they were keen on forming an Interim Government, the 1935 constitution could not be altered during the interim period and that the Interim Government would have to function within the framework of that constitution. The Government so formed would not be held responsible to Central Legislature, though of course, the members of the Government were free to resign individually or collectively if they failed "to pass an important measure or if a vote of no confidence is passed against them." The proposed Interim Government was to have an altogether new basis.

All the portfoilios including that of the War Member were to be held by Indians who were to be selected in consultation with main political parties in India. The Mission also pointed out that this Government would be given " greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day to day administration."

The Mission and the Vicaroy proposed a Government, constituted of twelve members, five from the Congress, five from the League and two from other parties. This proposal embodied the principle of parity between the Congress and the Mislim League. The Congress found itself unable to accept this principle and insisted on having fifteen members in the Government to carry on the administration of the country effectively and to adequately represent the interests of the minority communities. This was opposed by Mr. Jinnah and so the preliminary talks between the Viceroy on the one hand and the Muslim League and the Congress on the other failed. Some time later on June 16, the Viceroy in consultation with the Cabinet Mission issued a Statement in which he explained his own plan for the Interim Government. The original number of twelve ministers was increased to fourteen, six from the Congress, five from the Muslim League and one seat each for the Sikhs, Parsees and Christians. The Viceroy also made it clear that the procedure he was following in the formation of the Interim Government was in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of the communal problem, He also declared that in case any major party proved unwilling to join the Interim Government, he wouid proceed "with the formation of an Interim Government which will be as representative

as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16."

The Congress objection to the above plan was that it excluded a Nationalist Muslim. The Congress by such an exclusion of a nationalist Muslim from its quota of seats, was reduced to a Hindu Body and it would have lost its claim to represent all India without distinction of religion or caste. The Congress could not agree to such a position. Secondly the Viceroy had assured Mr. Jinnah that in case of any vacancy in the representation of the four minorities viz. the Scheduled Castes, the Sikhs, the Indian Christains, and the Parsees, both the major parties would be consulted before such a vacancy was filled. He had written to Mr. Jinnah, " If any vacancy occurs among the seats at present allotted to the representatives of the minorities, I shall naturally consult both the major parties before filling it," The Congress considered the Scheduled Castes as an integral part of Hindu society and the Congress President repudiated the view that they are a minority community. He was also opposed to the claim of the Muslim League which was a communal organisation representing the Muslims only that they should be consulted in the selection of a representative from another minority community. The most important objection, however, from the Congress point of view was that the Viceroy placed a veto in the hands of the League when he stated that no decision of a major communal issue could be taken by the interim government if majority of either of the main party opposed to it. The Congress had consented to such a provision in Union Legislature only and the provisional Government if it was responsible to the

Legislature composed of representatives on the population basis of major communities. For these reasons Congress rejected tha Vicceroy's proposal for the formation of the Interim Government though it decided to take part in the Constituent Assembly,

The Muslim League had decided to join the Government even when the Congress declined to do so. But the Viceroy postponed the formation of the interim Government and set up a caretaker Government of officials to take charge of affairs until a new provisional Government could be formed. The Muslim League charged the Viceroy of bad faith because the Viceroy had stated previously that whichever party aceepted the Statement of Cabinet Delegation and its proposals in regard to the formation of the Interim Govt., he would proceed with his task irrespective of whether the other party joined or declined to do so. But the Viceroy's reply to the charge was that he had merely postponed the formation of the Govt. and thought it fit to have some interval before the assumption of further negotiations in this matter. Mr. Jinuah, however, did not see eye to eye with the Viceroy and declared that " the British Government will forfeit the confidence of Muslim India. " The Council of the All-India Muslim League held its session in Bombay and reverted its former decision to accept the Statement of May 16 and decided. to reject the Statement and boycott the Constituent Assembly and have recourse to direct action for vindicating the honour and rights of Muslim India. (The Direct Action Resolntion passed on July 31, 1946)

Early in August the Viceroy sent a letter to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress President, and invited him

to make recommendations regarding the formation of the Interim Government.

The Congress Working Committee on 10th Agust, 1946 adopted a resolution accepting the Mission's Scheme in its entirety though it re-emphasised its own interpretation of certain clauses of the Missionss Statement. The Working Committee expressed its regret at the decision of the Muslim League not to participate in the Constituent Assembly and it appealed for co-operation of all those who had the good of the country at heart. Later, Pandit Nehru saw Mr. Jinnah but his talks with the latter bore no fruit as he could not persuade Mr. Jinnah to retrace his steps and influence him to co-operate in the formation of the Interim Government. Pandit Nehru, however, saw the Viceroy and proved willing to shoulder the responsibility of forming a Provisional National Government. An official communique was issued on August 24, 1246 which announced the formation of an Interim Government members of which were to be sworn in on September 2, 1946. Two more Muslim members were to be appointed later.

During long the period of British connection with India this was the first Indian Central Govt. in which leaders of political parties were participating and there was satisfaction and joy felt in the heart of the people who saw their dram of decades coming true. Except for the Muslim League this Government was fairly representative of all the important communities in India. In a speech broadcast on August 24, 1946 the Viceroy said:

"I am glad that the representatives of a very large political opinion in the country will be my colleagues. No one could be more sure that it is a coalition in which

both the main parties are represented that is needed at the moment in the interest of all parties and communities in India. This is a view which I know that the President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleggues hold as strongly as I do. His efforts, like mine, will still be directed to pursuading the Lesgue to join the Government. Let me state clearly the offer which has been made is still open to the Muslim League. They can propose five names for places in a Government of fourteen, of which six will be nominated by the Congress and three will be representatives of the minorities."

Soon after the assumption of office, on September 7, 1946 Pandit Nehru, as the Vice President of the Interim Government broadcast a speech to the following effect:-

"India is on the move and the old order passes. Too long have we been pasive spectators of events, the play-things of others. The initiative comes to our people now and we shall make the history of our choice. Let us join in this mighty task and make of India, the pride of our heart, great among nations, foremost in the arts of peace and progress We shall look to the common and forgotten man in India and seek to bring him relief and raise his standards of living. We shall continue our fight against the curse of untouchability and other forms of enforced inequality, and shall specially try to help those who are economically or otherwise backward. Today millions lack food and clothing and houses, and many are on the verge of starvation. To meet this immediate need is an urgent and difficult task. We hope, other countries will help us by sending foodgrains. An equally urgent and vital task for us is to conquer the spirit of discord that is abroad in India."

The Interim Government began to function as Cabinet but hard times and trying circumstances were ahead for it. The Muslim League in the beginning did not see its way to join the Government in spite of repeated efforts by the Viceroy and the Nawab of Bhopal. But at long last Mr. Jinnah decided to allow the Muslim League representatives to join the Interim Government and act as "sentinels" to look after and safeguard Muslim interests. He did not, however, commit himself or the Muslim League to take part in the Constituent Assembly. His nominees included four Muslims (one of them a Shia Muslim) and one representative of the Scheduled Castes from Bengal.

When the Muslim League joined the Government it was hoped that daily contacts of the leaders with one another and resposibility of office would bridge the gulf between the Congress and the Muslim League. But that was not to be. The League nominees acted as a separate block in the Cabinet and it was soon realised that the New Government was not a coalition Government but a patched-up cabinet. Members of the Government made grave allegations against one another in public. Pandit Nehru speaking on November 21, 1946 in the Congress Subjects Committee Meeting at Meerut stated that the atmosphere in the New Central Government after the League's entry had become so strained that the Congress members had twice threatened to resign. He openly charged that the League was endeavouring to establish itself as the "King's Party" in the Government and accused the Viceroy with failure to carry on the Government in the same spirit in which he had started. The Muslim League nominees had right to stay in the Government only if the League accepted the Long-term Plan of the Cabinet

Mission and decided to participate in the Constituent Assembly. But Mr. Jinnah demanded the postponement of the Constituent Assembly and declared that no Muslim League representative would participate in it. By the Viceroy's statement of June 16, that party alone which had accepted the Long-term plan and was willing to take part in the Constituent Assembly, could stay in the Interim Government. Since the Muslim League refused to reverse its Direct Action decision and participate in the Constituent Assmbly, the Viceroy was requested to demand withdrawal of the Muslim League nominees from the Interim Government.

Meanwhile, outside in the country there was the worst type of communal tension ever witnessed in India. The Muslim League had decided to observe August 16 as a Direct Action Day and the observence of this day in Calcutta led to widerspread and unprecedented communal riots which practically amounted to undecalred civil war between Hindus and Muslims. Between August 16 and 19, there was a collapse of civil administration in the city with a population of more than four millions. Life and property were at the mercy of hooligans. Streets were littered with the dead and dying. Destruction of property was incalculable. Total casualties amounted to more than over 5000 dead and 30000 wounded. In a modern world, under a civilised Government, with people's representatives at the helm of provincial affairs, it was very difficult to believe that these things could happen in a city which stood second in the British Empire. But these things did happen and even continued to happen in other parts of India. Bombay became the second victim of communal frenzy and since the beginning of Septemeber 1946, looting of property,

arson, stabbing and muder became every day occurances. But the worst was yet to happen and the Eastern Bengal carried the trophy for communal madness and medieval barbarity. The district of Noakhali and Tippera in Eastern Bengal were to follow the example of Calcutta massacres. Hindus constituted a very small percentge of population in these districts and inhuman atrocities were committed on the Hindu population there by frenzied mobs of Muslim hooligans. Besindes murder and arson, the rioters freely resorted to rape, abduction of women, burning of live bodies and forcible conversion.

The Noakhali news caused widespread stir amongst Hindus in other parts of the country and they found it impossible any longer to restrain themslves when their co-religionists were exposed to total annihilition and dishonour in a Muslim majority area. Especially in Bihar, the reaction was of an alarming nature. The Premier of Bihar had appealed previously to the Viceroy to interfere in East Bengal as rumours regarding atrocities committed in that province were helping to worsen the situation in Bihar. The Bihari Hindus adopted the same methods as their Muslims in Noakhali and it was reported that about 4000 Muslims were killed and many more wounded. It caused a distress to Congress leaders and especiolly to Gandhiji that a Congress province should become a scene of communal orgy and widespread violence. Gandhiji was on his way to Noakhali and from Calcutta he addressed an article to Bihar to stop fratricidal war on their Muslim brethren in minority:

"To Bihar,

Bihar of my dreams seems to have falsified them. I am not relying upon reports that might be prejudiced or

exaggarated. The continued presence of the Central Chief Minister and his colleague furnishes an eloquent tale of the tragedy of Bihar, It is easy enough to retort that things under the Muslim League Government in Bengal were no better, if not worse and that Bihar is merely a result of the latter. A bad act of one party is no justification for a similar act by the opposing party, more especially when it is rightly proud of its longest and largest political record. I must confess, too, that although I have been in Culcutta for over a week, I do not yet know the the magnitude of the Bengal tragedy. Though Bihar calls me I must not interrupt my programme for Nokhali. And is counter-communalism any answer to the communalism of which Congressmen have accused the Muslim League ? Is it nationalism to seek barbarously to crush the fourteen per cent. of the Muslims in Bihar ?"

Two members of the Central Gevernment, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar toured the affected areas, and the former personally appealed to rural peasant mobs to remain non-violent and not to take reprisals for what was happening in East Bengal. The fair name of Bihar was sufficiently tarred by murders and persecutions of Bihari Muslims and it would be disgraceful if they continued indulgence in violent deeds. The Bihar Government also took stern measures to check the riots. There was also possibility of Gandhiji undertaking a fast if these riots continued. The Government distributed hundreds af thousands of pamphlets to this effect and all these measures had a quietening effect on the Bihar situation and the riots subsided in a very short time in Bihar, while in other parts of India they continued to take their daily toll of human life and suffering.

And while yet the country at large was going through the period of agony and distress, the differences between the Congress and the League were growing every day and it appeared imminent that a break would occur over some question or other in the Interim Government. The Constituent Assembly was duly held on December 9,1946; but the Muslim League members boycotted it. Previous to its first session, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Baldev Sing, Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan along with the Viceroy had gone to London to have consultations with the British Government desirous of making an attempt to bring about a settlement between the Congress and the League over the issue of interpretation of the grouping-clause in the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16. The joint talks in London did not finally settle the differences in the various diverging interpretations of the Congress and the League. The British Government, however, supported the League view point and later in January 1947 the Congress also accepted the British Govts' December statement supporting the League interpretation. But in spite of the Congress acceptance of the December Statement the Muslim League persisted in its attitude of non-co-operation with the working of the Constituent Assembly though they did not think it fit to abandon their advantageous position in the Interim Government, The demand for the withdrawal of the Muslim League members from the Govt. unless they participated in the Constituentt Assembly grew in intensity when an altogether new position was created by Mr. Attlee's declaration in the House of Commons on February 20,1947 that the British Government wished to transfer all power to India by a date not later than June 1948 and that if a fully agreed constitution has not been worked out by the Constituent Assembly by that time then "His Majesty's Government

will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over on the date; whether as a whole to some form of Central Govt. or in some areas to the existing Provincial Governments or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interest of the Indian people."

This announcement by the British Prime Minister gave a reality to the political responsibility the members of the Interim Government were already shouldering. The time left for the Indian political parties to bridge over differences between themselves and help the transfer of power take place peacefully, was just over a year and three months and within this short period it was expected of them to produce an agreed constitution after which the British Government was to hand over power to the Central Government established according to that constitution. If the parties failed to agree before the time limit set by the announcement the British Government would transfer power in such away as in their opinion it would be ' in the best interests of the Indian people. " Almost all of the major political parties in India welcomed this annuoncement. The Congress Working Committee by a special resolution directly appealed to the Muslim League to come to have a frank and heart-to-heart discussion with them in order to settle the differences between them and find out, if possible, a middle course agreable to both. This appeal went unheeded. The British Government's announcement conceded the possibility that in case of failure to achieve agreement the power may be transferred " to the existing provincial Govts." This was an indirect encouragement to parties who wanted to secede from India to capture power in provinces and the Muslim League launched a campaign in the

Punjab, N.-W. F. P, and Assam with a view to capture power and form its own ministries there. The Provinces of Bengal and Sind were already governed by the Muslim League ministries and if the Muslim League were to capture power in the remaining three provinces of Pakistan of their conception, they would easily achieve their goal. With that end in view they started agitation in all these Provinces and though the disguise for it was apparently different in different Provinces yet the ultimate motive was undoubtedly to capture power. In Assam the agitation took the form of illegal occupation of grazing grounds by Muslim immigrants from Bengal. The Congress Ministry in Assam tried to solve the problem by negotiation with the leaders of the Muslim League but these leaders had even flouted the earlier agreement arrived at between the League Ministry in Bengal and the former League Ministry in Assam. The new Congress Government stuck to that agreement and declared the immigration of Muslims and their occupation of grazing grounds illegal and forcefully ejected the immigrants from the occupied lands. Many prominent Muslim Leaguers were imprisoned and yet the agitation showed no signs of abetment.

In the Panjab and N.- W. F. P. the movement was started as a protest against the Unionist and the Congress Ministries in respective Previoces for their alleged suppression of the people's civil liberties. In these Provinces especially in the former. almost all the League members of the Provincial Legislatures took a leading part in the movement and consequently were imprisoned. The agitation in the beginning was conducted peacefully but finally the agitators freely indulged in wanton violence and the movement which was mainly politioal in character deteriorated

into communal rioting in the Punjab, As elsewbere looting of property, arson, desecration of holy places and murders—all this was freely resorted to by frenzied mobs and finally the Unioninst Ministry was forced to resign and the imprisoned Muslim League leaders triumphantly came out and yet the League by itself could not secure a majority in the Provincial Legislature and therefore was unable to form a stable Ministry in the Province. Thereupon the Governor proclaimed Section 93 and took all power in his own hands. The communal riotings, once started could not however be stopped. The same tale was repeated in N,-W, F, P,; but as the Congress had a strong majority in the Provincial Legislature, the Congress Ministry there refused to submit to the violence of hooligans, The minority communities in both the provinces had to undergo unprecendented sufferings and many of them had to be removed to places of safety. The country knew no peace inspite of repeated appeals made jointly by party leaders.

The Constituent Assembly, in the meanwhile, held two more sessions in January 1947 and April 1947. The League boycotted both the sessions. It became now evident that unless the deadlock regarding the Constituent Assembly was successfully solved; it would be impossible to execute a peaceful transfer of power in the country, It was then expected that the British Govt. would go into the whole constitutional problem anew and again there was a series of communicatlons between Delhi and London. A new announcement was awaited and therefore all the differences between the two parties in the Interim Government were overlooked.

The long awaited announcement finally came on June 3. 1947. It conceded Pakistan to the Muslim League but also

envisaged partition of Bengal and the Punjab. Western Bengal and the Eastern Punjab contained non-Muslim majorities and it would have been a flagrant breach of the democratic principles of self-determination if these parts were forced into Pakistan against the wishes of the people concerned. The Congress and the League leaders accepted this plan which made provision for transferring all power to two independent and sovereign States in India.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

In the modern world there are several States who have framed their constitutions through a duly elected representative Assemly entrusted solely with with the task of framing the constitution. From a study of their constitutional history some definite conclusions can be drawn regardig successful constitution-making. Some of these had first to win back national freedom from foreign imperial domination before they could frame a constitution according to the freely expressed will of the people. Thus Ireland could establish a Free State of Irish Republic and frame its constitution after a very long drawn out and an incessant struggle, lasting over a very long periond in her history, with Imperial Britain. Some other countries were not under any foreign domination. But the people-the man in the street-had no say in the Government of his own country. The system of Government existing there was despotic, and the King ruled in his own " divine right ". The people of such countries had to fight against their own rulers for their liberation. France is a glorious example of such a country. By the most bloody revolution any country has ever witnessed, the French people dethroned the tyrannical Bourbons and took over all political power with the noble motto of 'Liberty, Fraternity and Equality ". There are some other States who were victims of neither foreign Imperialism nor native autocratic rule. These states were enjoying political liberty and were fully sovereign within their boundaries. But their geographical circumstances were such that in the modern world they would not be able to make progress in any field unless the adjoining States agreed to delegate some of their

sovereign powers to a Federal Government formed by the coming together of such States. The U. S. A, U. S. S. R; South Africa and Australia are the examples of those states whose componant units delegated their sovereign power to Central Federal Govt. All of these states were either previously independent States or had secured independence before they were formed into a Federation.

In all these three catogories of States we find that peoples' voice is finally effective and conclusive in all attempts at constitution making. Any constitution, even when framed by a competent body, was required to have the support of the people concerned. The people had the right either to accept or reject the constitution referred to them for their approval. But there is also a fourth catagory of constitution making in which, apparently, there is an attempt to preserve the democratic institutions but the constitution itself is framed neither by the people or is it referred to them for their approval. Here the constitution is to evolve out of deleberations between representatives of foreign power or powers who have conquered the country as a consequence of an armed clash and who have occupied it for the purpose of taking over the administrative responsibility on themselves. Present Germany and Japan are the two countries which form the example of this type of constitution as could be seen from the mode of their constitution framing by the Three Great occupying Powers.

The pre-requisites of constitution-making may be said to be as follows:—

1. The need for a new consitution arises only when a section or sections of people constituting the State feel dissatisfied with and agitate against the existing system of Government.

2. Effective transfer of power. This may mean the seizure of power by violent methods such as bloody revolutions as in France and the U. S. S. R. or a decisive military victory like that of the American Colonies in 1774. There may be transfer of power by peaceful methods also. The federating States in the American Colonies or those of Australia and South Africa provide an example of peaceful transfer ot power. In their case, the sovereign States relinquished part of their sovereingnty in favour of rhe Federation for mutual benefit of all the federating units.

3. A Constituent Body is brought into being by Provisional Government–a Government which assumes authority during the transitional period required for complete seizure of power. But once this Body is convened and its deleberations begun the Provisional Government is not to influence its working and make that Body subservient to the Government. In other words, to produce a democratic constitution the sovereign character of the Constituent Assembly must be maintained and its decisions may not be influenced except by the peoples' freely expressed will.

We will now study India's constitutional development.

With the advent of British Power in India,the constituent authority shifted from the Indian to the British ruling class and we find various enactments of British Parliament with respect to India's mode of administration.

The Indo-British connection may be said to have begun since 1757 at Plassey and during the next hundred years the British conquest of India was most complete, At the time of British conquest Indian political institutions were in a very disintegrating state and had become easy prey to foreign superiority. The East India Company had to

maintain peace and order in parts under their domination in the interest of their trade and commerce. The Company was obliged as a result of its heavy political responsibilities, to apply for financial aid to the British Parliament and thus began the British Parliamentary authority over India. The Parliament passed various legislations for the East India Company's Indian territories beginning with the Regulating Act of 1773 and then periodical legislstions passed at the time of renewing the charter of the East India Company. The 1857 " Mutiny " shook off the impassiveness of the Parliament with regard to their Indian Dominion and Parliament took over entire political control from the Company. In 1861 the Indian Council Act was passed by which the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors were to have Executive Councils to help them in their administrative task. This Act was broad-based in 1892 by which the Councils were expanded to include the Indian element. Then in 1908 came the Morley-Minto Reforms by which the Provincial and Central Legislative Councils were brought into existence and along which the official nomination there was introduced in them representative element though based on very high property and educational qualifications. Then came the 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms by which the Provincial Constitution was more democratised and some departments of the Provincial Governments were transferred to the Indian hands. In 1935 the Parliament passed the Government of India Act and this made the Paovinces completely autonomous and the Cabinet Ministers fully responsible to the peoples' respresentatives.

This is a short sketch of Constitutional developement of India since her connection with Great Britain. In the

various Acts and Reforms passed by the Parliament the authority behind them was British in character, The people had no say in the matter. No doubt in the later stages Iddian of developement we find that the leaders of Indian political parties and other expert constitutionalists were consulted in the initial stages of discussions regarding the contemplated constitutional refroms. Thus, for example, Mr. Gokhale was called upon to give his views on India's economic condition before the Welby Commision. Coming to more recent times we have the example of three Round Table Conferences and the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee. For these Rounds Table conferences the British Govt. invited the representative of the Congress, the Muslim League, the Sikhs, the Depressed Classes and some other important minorities and interests The Congress disassociated itself tn the beginning from taking part in these discussions. But later on it joined the Second Round Table Conference. Some of these invitees to the Conference definitely possessed peoples' confidence and any constitutional decisions taken on their advice or in consultation with them would have easily secured peoples' consent. But these delegates to the Conference were expected merely to give their views on India's constitutional problems and the decisive power finally rested with the British Parliament. So we find that during all the constitutional developement since the commencement of Indo-British relation Indian people were never actively connected in any of rhe constitutional reforms. The framing of the constitution (in the sense of the fundamental laws for the governance of the country) was always done by the British Govt. through Parliamentary legislation. The British official view is clearly expressed in the following statement.

" But the Committee thinks that it is of the utmost importance from the very inauguration of these constitutional changes, that Parliament should make it quite plain that the responsibility for the successive stages of the development of self-Govt. in India rests on itself and itself alone, and that it cannot share this responsibility with, much less delegate it to, the newly elected legislatures of India. " *

But the public opinion in India underwent such a tremendous change during past two decades that a constituiion framed by British Parliament would be no longer acceptable.

In the first place such a constitution would be derogatary to India's national honour and secondly the people could never be brought to believe that such a constitution would ever be favourable to India – that it would ever guard the interests of India's teeming millions. The British Government's White Paper of 1934 and the India Act of 1935 based on that Paper were both rejected by the Congress as well as the Muslim League. The Congress Working Committee's resolution on the White Paper says,

" The White Paper in no way expresses the will of the people of Indian political parties, and falls far short of the Congress goal, if it does not retard the progress towards it. The only satisfactory alternative to the White Paper is a Constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage or as near it as possible, with the power, if necessary, to the important minorities to have

* From the Report of the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill 1919.

their representatives elected exclusively by the electors belonging to such minorities.----"

This is the first direct reference to the Constitutent Assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise for the framing up of a constitution for India. By this resolution, the Congress gave a direct, clear lead to the Nation as well as the British Govt. and showed a way to solve India's constitutional problem. By this resolution the Congress made it quite clear that the demand for Indian Independence was not only of a destructive character in the sense of destroying all the vestiges of British Imperialism in India. It was also ready to fill democratically the void created by this destruction and that India was ready to build the edifice of freedom through the efforts of a duly elected constituent assembly–a method accepted as being the most democratic throughout the modern civilized world. The more moderate elements in India's political life were also favourable to this idea of constituent assembly. The Resolution passed by the Swaraj Party conference in May 1934 inter alia stated;

"This conference claims for India, in common with other nations, the night of self-determination and is of the opinion that the only method of applying that principle is to convence a constitutent assembly representative af all sections of the Indian people to frame an acceptable Constitution."

But, as Dr. Sachchidanand Sinha pointed out in his inaugural address to the first session of India's Constituent Assembly, Mahatma Ganthi had also clearly expressed as for back as 1922 this idea of India framing her own Constitution through her elected representatives. He wrote,

"Swaraj will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression,

expressed through an Act of Parliament. But it will merely be a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India. The ratification will be a treaty to which Britain will be a party. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed through their freely chosen representatives."

The Indian public opinion thus gradually turned from the Parliament to an elected Constituent Assembly for the framing of India's constitution and was no longer in a mood to recognise British Parliament's right to frame India's constitution. Almost all the Indian parties totally rejected the India Act of 1935. Sir Maurice Gawyer has uniquely interpreted this rejection. He says, "A wholly new situation came into existence when the Act of 1935, wisely or unwisely, was rejected by the Indian Parties. Great Britain has accepted the rejection and will draft no more constitutions for India; and India by the very fact of rejection has accepted the responsibilty of drafting a contitution for herself ------- Nor can the responsibilty be shared between India and Great Britain. There are, of course, certain aspects of any constitutional settlement which will need Great Britain's assent; but the main constitutional instrument, the constitution under which the people of India will thereafter be governed, rather govern themselves, must be the work of Indian hands."

Prof. Coupland, the English constitutional expert, also writes in the same view; "There can be no question, it need hardly be said, of trying to draft a new constitution for India. Such a task is far beyond one man's powers. The last attempt at constitution-making, the Act of 1935, took several years and engaged the labour of a great company of British and Indian statesmen. The making of new

Constitution, moreover, however deeply we in this country may be interested in it, is no longer our business."

The British official opinion also came to accept this view-point especially under stress of war. In 1940, Lord Linlithgow, the then Viceroy of India declared in his famous August offer:

"The second point of general interest is the machinary for building within the British Commonwealth of Nations the new constitutional scheme when the time comes. There has been a very strong insistence that the framing of that scheme should be primarily the responsibilty of Indians themselves, and should originate from Indian conceptions of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life. His Majesty's Government are in sympathy with that desire and wish to see it given the fullest political expression subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connection with India had imposed on her and for which His Majesty's Govt. cannot divest themselves of that responsibility---His Majesty's Govt. authorises me to declare that they will most readily assent to the setting up, after the conclusion of the War-with the least possible delay a body representatives of the principal elements in India's political life in order to devise the framework of the new Constitution."

This acceptance by Britain of India's right to frame her own constitution in accordance with the Indian conception of the social, economic and political strutcure of Indian life" was hedged in with certain conditions But no longer her inherent right to frame her own constitution was questioned and though this recognition could not be implemented during war-time, a clear and solemn undertaking was given on behalf of the British Government to give effect to it on the conclusion of hostilities.

The State Paper of May 16, 1946 gave concrete shape to the recognition by Britain of India's right to frame her own constitution and a provision was made in it for the calling up of a Constituent Assembly for the first time in India's history. Though certain conditions were imposed on the proposed Assembly, in the main, it was to be a completely sovereign body. The conditions imposed were:

1) The safe guarding of minority rights and
2) The conclusion of an Indo-British treaty.

But these conditions did not detract from the sovereign character of the Assembly. The division of the country has solved the chief minority problem and a great irritant is removed from India's political chess-board.

The second restriction on the present Constituent Assembly, formed under the plan of May 16, 1946 is the Indo-British Treaty. It is but natural that when sovereign power is being transferred from one nation to the other, as a result of peaceful negotations, some problems connected with the association of the two nations spread over many generations may arise and demand tactful consideration from both the parties. The negotiations over these problems and conclusions reached must therefore form the basis of any treaty to be concluded between them. There would be nothing therefore in such a treaty which would be derogatory to India's honour. British commercial interests in this country, India's blocked Sterling balances in England, certain defence problems, Indian nationals in the Dominions of the British Commonwealth of Nations and certain other similar matters will have to be settled by a treaty between India's Constituent Assembly and the British Govt. But this treaty would impose no restrictions on the sovereign character of the Constituent Assembly.

Pandit Nehru referring to the source of authority behind the deliberations in the Constituent Assembly stated,

"You all know that this Constituent Assembly is not what many of us wished it to be. It has come into being under particular conditions and the British Government has a hand in its birth."

"They have attached to it certain conditions. We accepted the State Paper which may be called the foundation of this Assembly, after serious deliberations and we shall endeavour to work within its limits. But you must not ignore the source from which this Assembly derives its strength. Governments do not come into being by State Papers. Governments are, in fact, the expression of the will of the people. We have met here today because of the strength of the people behind us and we shall go as far as the people --- not any party or group but the people as a whole --- shall wish us to go. We should, therefore, always keep in mind the passions that lie in the hearts of the masses of the Indian people and try to fulfil them."

Thus India's Constituent Assembly, though it is at present held under the British aegis, is really sovereign in character. If the implications of the sovereign character are properly understood, we would at once realize that this is what the people of India have been fighting for, for generations past. Many Indian patriots have voluntarily faced bullets, gone to the scaffold and courted imprisonment in order that in the end India might win back that constituent authority which vested in the British Parliament. This fight has throughout represented a clash of idealogies—those in authority holding the view that constituent authority vested in the Parliament and the Indian people holding the view that all authority must ultimately rest with them. This clash of idealogies has concluded in

favour of the Indian people and India's first Contituent Assembly has come into existence.

INDIA'S FIRST CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

The first meeting of the Constitueut Assembly of India took place in New Delhi on the 9th December, 1946 under the provisional Chairmanship of Dr. Sachidanand Sinha. If was attended by over 200 members but the Muslim League representatives boycotted this session. The Constituent Assembly received messaages of goodwill from three great and independent nations of the world, viz. the U. S. A., China and Australia.

MESSAGE FROM THE U.S.A.

" My dear Dr. Sinha,

It gives me great pleasure to trasmit herewith a copy of a telegram I have just received from the Honorable Dean Acheson, the Acting Secretary of the State of the United States.

The telegram received is as follows:

'From the Acting Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Dr. Sachidanad Sinha,
Provisional Chairman of the Constituent Assembly,
New Delhi.

With the approach of December 9, I extend to you as Provisional Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, and through you to the Indian people, the sincere good wishes of the United States Government and of the people of the United States for a successful conclusion of the great task you are about to undertake. India has a great contribution to make to the peace. stability and cultural advancement of mankind, and your deliberations will be watched with deep interest and hope by freedom-loving people through out the entire world "

MESSAGE FROM THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

New Delhi,

Dr. Sachidananda Sinha (Provisional Chairman) Constituent Assembly: "On the auspicious occasion of the opening of the Indian Constituent Assembly I have the honour to extend to Your Excellency in the name of the National Government of China my heartiest congratulations. I sincerely hope that your great Assembly will succeed in laying a solid foundation for a democratic and prosperous India."

WANG SHIH CHIEN.
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of China.

MESSAGE FROM AUSTRALIA

"Australia has watched with keen interest and sympathy the course of events which have given the people of India their rightful place in the community of nations. The Australian Government, therefore, greets the Constituent Assembly as an outward sign of a new era for India and offers the delegates of the Constituent Assembly their best wishes for success in their task."

After some preliminary business, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, was unanimously elected us the permanent Chairman of the Constituent Assembly on 11th December, 1946. After doing some formal business, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved a Resolution which declared the aims and objects of the Constituent Assembly. This Resolution was in fact a "Declaration" and "a Pledge." To quote the Hon. Mr. Sinha: "It gives a picture of the vision of future India... That India of the future is to be a democratic and decentralised republic, in which the ultimate sovereignty is

to lie with the people and in which fundamental rights are to be safeguarded to minorities inhabiting this land."

THE TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION

1. This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution;

2. WHEREIN the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside British India and the States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the Independent Sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all; and

3. WHEREIN the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter according to the Law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous Units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting therefrom; and

4. WHEREIN all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people; and

5. WHEREIN shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political : equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association, and action, subject to law and public morality; and

6 WHEREIN adequate safeguaerds shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes; and

7. WHEREBY shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic and its sovereign rights on land, sea, and air according to justice and the law of civilised nations, and

8. This ancient land attains its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

In moving this resolution Pandit Jawaharla Nehru in a solemn and determined statement declared his hope thus: "I trust that it is in that solemn spirit that we are meeting here and that we, too, whether we meet in this chamber or other chambers, or in the fields or in the market-place, will go on meeting and continue our work till we have finished it." Further in the speech he extended his hand of friendship to all the world and expected the world to grasp that hand of friendship in the same spirt in which it was extended. He proclaimed from the platform of the Constituent Assembly: "We approached the world in a friendly way. we want to make friends, with all countries. We want to make friends, in spite of the long history of conflict in the past, with England also, The House knows that recently I paid a visit to England. I was reluctant to go for resons which the House knows well. But I went because of personal request from the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I went and I met with courtsy everywhere. And yet at this psychological moment in India's history when we wanted, when we hungered for messages of cheer, friendship and co-operation from all over the world, and more especially from England, because of the past contact and conflict between us. Unfortunately, I came back without

any message of cheer, but with a large measure of disappointment. I hope that the new difficulties that have arisen, as every one knows, because of the recent statements made by the British Cabinet and others in authority there will not come in our way and that we shall yet succeed in going ahead with the co-operation of all of us here and those who have not come. It has been a blow to me, and it has hurt me.

When we are going to stride ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were mentioned which had not been mentioned previously and new methods of procedure were suggested. ------- Most of us here during the past many years, for a generation or more have often taken part in in the struggle for India's freedom. We have gone through the valley of the shadow. We are used to it and if necessity arises we shall go through it again."

Dr M. R. Jayakar moved the following amendment to the resolution:

> "This Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve "that the Constitution to be prepared by this "Assembly for the future governance of India shall "be for a free and democratic Sovereign State; but "with a view to securing, in the shaping of such a "Constitution the co-operation of the Muslim League "and the Indian States, and thereby intensifying the "firmness of this resolve, this Assembly postpones "the further consideration of this question to a later "date, and to enable the representatives of these two "bodies to participate, if they so choose, in the "deliberations of this Assembly."

The original Resolution was in respect of the whole of India. But the position of the Constituent

Assembly was that the Muslim League representatives had decided not to attend the Assembly in view of the fact that the Congress acceptance of the State Paper of May 16 was not without reservation, for they had put a different interpretation from that of the Cabinet Mission and the Muslim League with respect to the grouping clause and the procedure of voting in Sections. When the Constituent Assembly met the Congress had not accepted the British Government's statement of December 6, upholding the Mission and the League interpretation. This statement was in the form of an addition to the State Paper of May 16.It had expressed in clear terms the British Government's intention not to impose the constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly on any unwilling parts of India. It was, then, obvious that in the absence of majority of Muslim representatives in the Constituent Assembly, the constitution could not be applicable to the Muslim majority Provinces and the labours of the Assembly would be wasted as far as those Provinces were concerned. Dr. Jaykar, by his amendment, sought to give an opportunity to the Muslim League to take part in the deliberations of the Assembly. In the meanwhile the Congress was expected to reconsider its position in regard to the Statement of December 6. In case it accepted that Statement the League also might reconsider its "Direct Action Resolution" passed in Bombay on 30th July, 1946 and might join the Assembly. If the League could be made to associate itself with the Congress in its work of framing a constitution of free India, nothing would obstruct the progress of the Constituent Assembly. These considerations led Dr. Jaykar to move his amendment.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar also supported the amendment in a forceful and well-argued speech. He

pointed out the difficulties in the way of the Assembly. He declared his firm belief in the unity of India. He said, "I am quite convinced that given time and circumstances nothing in the world will prevent this country from becoming one. With all our castes and creeds, I have not the slightest hesitation that we shall in some form be a united people. I have no hesitation in saying that notwithstanding the agitation of the Muslim Leauge for the partition of India some day enough light would dawn upon the Muslims themselves and they too will begin to think that a United India is better even for them."

However, the purpose of his opposition to the main Resolution was not that he differed from the objectives set forth in it but that he could foresee some difficulties in the way of their realization because the absence of the Muslim League. He stated:

"So far as the ultimate goal is concerned, I think none of us need have any apprehensions. None of us need have any doubt. Our difficulty is not about the ultimate future. Our difficulty is how to make the heterogeneous mass that we have to-day take a decision in common and march on the way which leads us to unity. Our difficulty is not with regard to the ultimate, our difficulty is with regard to the beginning. I should have thought that in order to make us willing friends, in order to induce every party, every section, in this country to take on to the road it would be an act of greatest statesmanship for the majority party even to make a concession to the prejudices of people who are not prepared to march together and it is for that, that I propose to make this appeal. Let us leave aside slogans, let us leave aside words which frighten people. Let us even make a concession to the prejudices of our opponents, bring them in so that they may willingly join with us marching

upon that road which as I said, if we walk long enough, must necessarily lead us to unity."

He pointed out that if concessions to the demands of the Muslim League were not made and there was a groundless hostile action of the Congress, the eventuality of a civil war in India was almost certain. The Congress would have to fight against a combination of the Muslim League and the British Government and even if the Congress came out successful still the Hindu Empire would be at perpetual warfare with Muslim India. Force of arms, he said, could not solve the minority problem in India. In this connection he pointed out to the arguments that Burke put forward when England was at war with the American colonies. The English opinion in general was in favour of waging a successful war against the American rebels. But Burke pointed out that force would not ultimately prevail. He argued "First, Sir, permit me to observe, that the use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing; and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered."

"My next objection is its uncertainty. Terror is not always the effect of force: and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resources: for conciliation failing, force remains; but, force failing, no other hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness; but they can never be preserved as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence.

"A further objection to force is that you impair the object by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover; but depreciated, sunk, wasted and consumed in the contest."

Referring to these arguments of Burke. Dr, Ambedkar said, "These are weighty words which would be perilous to ignore. If there is anybody who has in his mind the project of solving the Hindu-Muslim problem by force, which is another name of solving it by war in order that the Muslims may be subjugated and made to surrender to the constitution that might be prepared without their consent, this country would be involved in perpetually conquering them. The conquest would not be once and for ever"

Therefore he advocated the postponement of further consideration on Pandit Jawaharlal's Resolution on Aims and Objects on the Constituent Assembly. The majority of the representatives were entirely in agreement with the sentiments expressed in the Resolution and were in opposition to postpone the Resolution till the next session of the Assembly which was scheduled to meet again on the 20th January 1947 But ultimately wise counsels and the forceful arguments of Dr. M. R Jayakar and Dr Ambedkar prevailed and the consideration of the Resolution was postponed to the next session in order to give a further chance to the Muslim League to consider the matter in the light of the Statement of December 6 and the sincere desire of various Congress leaders as expressed in their speeches in the Constituent Assembly to have the association of the League representatives in the task of framing the constitutio of a free, independent and sovereign India,

The A.I C.C accepted the Statement of December 6, in its meeting on January, 5, 1947. The Resolution stated:-

"The A.I C.C is firmly of the opinion that the constitution for a free and independent India should be framed by the people of India on the basis of as wide an agreement as possible: There must be no interference whatsoever by

an external authority, and no compulsion of any province or parts of the province by another province. The A.-I.C.C. realizes and appreciates the difficulties placed in the way of some provinces, notably Assam and the N.W.F P. and the Sikhs in the Punjab by the British Cabinet's scheme of May 16, 1946 and more especially by the interpretation put upon it by the British Government in their Statement of December 6, 1946. The Congress cannot be a party to any such compulsion or imposition against the will of the people concerned, a principle, which the British Government have themselves recognised.

"The A.-I. C. C. is anxious that the Constituent Assembly should proceed with the work of framing a constitution for a free India, with the goodwill of all parties concerned and, with a view to removing the difficulties that have arisen owing to varying interpretations, agree to advise action in accordance with the interpretation of the British Government in regard to the procedure to be followed in Sections. It must be clearly understood, however, that this must not involve any attempt at such compulsion of a province or part of a province has the right to take such action as may be deemed necessary in order to give effect to the wishes of the people concerned. The future course of action will depend upon the developments that take place, and the A.-I. C. C., therefore, directs the Working Committee to advise upon it whenever circumstances so require, keeping in view the basic principles of provincial autonomy."

The Muslim League did not take this acceptance by the Congress of December 6 Statement, as sincere and therefore, it refused to have anything to do with the Constituent Assembly. Thus the postponement of Pandit Nehru's Resolution did not have the desired effect of bringing in the Muslim League and harnessing its talents and willing co-operation to the difficult task of framing India's Constitution. The second session of the Constituent Assembly began on 30th January 1947 and in that meeting the Assembly adopted the Resolution of Pandit Nehru unanimously, regardless of the renewed absence of the Muslim League representatives.

Further developments in the country and consequent division of it created another Pakistan Constituent Assembly

and the task of the Indian Assembly is made easier because of lack of any effective opposition to the majority Party. Yet the deliberations of the Assembly must produce a democratic constitution. The future Constitution of India must be based on the following fundamental principles:-

1. All authority in the Republic of India derives from the people and belongs to the people.
2. All citizens of the Republic of India are equal before the law and enjoy equal rights regardless of their caste, creed or religion.
3. No privileges in virtue of birth, property, status, and educational qualification shall be recognised.
4. All citizens regardless of sex, nationality, race, creed, who are over 21 years of age shall have the right to elect to provincial and central legislatures,
 The suffrage shall be universal, equal and direct and shall be carried out by secret ballot.
5. Women shall have equal rights with men in all fields of state, economic and socio-political rights
 The State shall specially protect the interest of mothers and children and women workers shall be entitled during child-birth for full pay and other maternity benefits.
6. Freedom of conscience, and of worship shall be guaranteed by the State to all citizens.
 Religious communities whose teaching is not contrary to the constitution of the Indian Republic shall be free in all religious matters and in the performance of their religious ceremonies, They shall have freedom to propagate their religion. But the abuse of religion for political purposes and the formation of political organisations on a religious basis shall be strictly forbidden.
7. All citizens of the State shall be guaranteed the freedom of the Press, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of peaceful demonstrations.

8. Citizens shall be guaranteed the inviolability of person.

 No person shall be detained or arrested without a duly authorised warrent by a competent authority.

9. The private dwelling of the citizen shall be inviolable and nobody shall enter his premises without his consent or nobody shall be entitled to search it wiihout a duly authorised warrent from a competent authority.

10. In order to raise the general cultural standard of the Republic of India the State shall ensure free accessibility to schools, colleges and other cultural institutions.

11. All citizens, regardless of their caste, creed, religion or sex shall be entitled to State service on merits or their competence There shall be no reservation in services for any minority communities and due qualifications shall be the only criterion for service.

12. The system of separate electorates shall be abolished and shall be replaced by the system of joint electorates with reservation of seats for the minority communities for an initial period of ten years only. During which period these communities shall be provided facilities to come abreast with the more advanced of their sister communities.

13. In cases of grave State emergencies, the State shall be entitled to enforce compulsory universal military service. In normal times the citizens shall be allowed to pursue their own callings according to their individual tastes.

CHAPTER IX

Whither India?

India must break with much of her past and not allow it to dominate the present. Our lives are encumbered with the dead wood of this past; all that is dead and has served its purpose has to go. But that does not mean a break with, or a foregetting of, the vital and life-giving in that past. We can never forget the ideals that have moved our race, the dreams of the Indian people through the ages, the wisdom of the ancients, the buoyant energy and love of life and nature of our fore-fathers, their spirit of curiosity and mental adventure, the daring of their thought, their splendid achievements in literature, art and culture, their love of truth and duty and freedom, the basic values that they set up, their understanding of life's, mysterious ways, their toleration of other ways than their's, their capacity to absorb other peoples and their cultural accomplishments, synthesize them and develop a varied and mixed culture; nor can we forget the myriad experiences which have built up our ancient race and lie embedded in our sub-conscious minds. We will never forget them or cease to take pride in that noble heritage of ours. If India forgets them she will no longer remain India and much that has made her our joy and pride will cease to be. *

— Jawaharlal Nehru.

India is on the threshold of a new era. And what does it hold in store for us? Would it open for us a new chapter in our long history and lead us to the fulfilment of our high destiny in the world or would it yet again interrupt us in the noble pursuit of that destiny and bring us dishonour and disgrace? We have noble traditions to be proud

* (The Discovery of India. Page 449-50)

of; we have an ancient culture; we possess an inherent capacity for growth; we have an amazing power to absorb and assimilate new ideas. However, the domination of the country by a foreign power for about two centuries has left a characteristic impress upon the people who have lost their old moorings and drifted aimlessly with time. So long we have been thinking of freedom in its political sense only and it was but natural that all our attempts were directed towards achieving freedom in that sense alone. As a subject race under foreign domination our growth in every sphere and activity of life was stunted and we were smarting under the mortification of slavery. But now our struggles have brought us to our cherished goal of political freedom and as an independent nation we soon aspire to enjoy a status of equality in the comity of nations. We are now left entirely free to follow our destiny unhampered by any foreign power. Some of our brethren have chosen at this critical time to part company with us and without hatred, prejudice or ill-will we must wish them God-speed for it is in the exercise of their own right that they have chosen to seek a separate destiny from us. But what destiny the rest of us are after? Does the political freedom bring us any nearer to peace, liberty and security? We have to consider our freedom in terms of emancipation of the common man and woman and have also to recognise the fact that in the modern world independence is also synonymous with inter-dependence.

What would be the basis of the new structure of society and the new social order that we are going to build up in India?

The world today is based on the force of violence and naturally the social structure in every country corresponds to this basis. Wars and consequent miseries result from this and the aching world today will find no escape from its agony unless this basis is changed. Why this violence? That is a pertinent question.

There are inherent contradictions in society which is today composed of two contending groups: the haves and the have-nots. Those who are in possession of the means of production control the economic life of a community. Due to technical advancement and rapid industrialisation the economic structure of the community is inclined toward centralization and the older village-economy has disintegrated bringing death, misery and sufferings to millions. This has happened in every country that had taken to intensive industrialization and in India, too that tale was repeated resulting in discord between various component parts of the community such as Landlord vs. Peasant, Capital vs. Labour, Industry vs. Agriculture, Urban Areas vs. Rural Areas. The centuries-old socio-economic harmony was disturbed when the country was put on an economic programme of industrialization and the glittering economic changes widely publicised as economic progress of the country. But it was convenienantly forgotten that this progress was limited to certain urban areas in the country and to certain upper strata of the community. Except for them the rest of the country and its people found themselves in the deep abyss of economic slavery and constantly on the verge of starvation.

What was the reason for this misery and starvation? Was it British rule? It may be true that the British

rule was responsible to a certain extent. But that does not lead us to the basic and fundamental cause. British imperialism in itself was a result of the Industrial Age which was driving the industrially advanced countries toward expansionism leading to acquisition of industrially backward countries that had not seen till then the light of modern science. This acquisitiveness on the part of imperial nations cost a colossal loss of life in colonial countries and led to their economic destruction. Before the British connection India was economically a self-sufficient country and had commercial relations with distant parts of the world, such as Greece, Egypt, Arabia, Syria, Persia, China, and Phillipine Islands. Her exports were chiefly finished products of silk and cotton, precious stones, ivory, spices etc.; but raw materials were hardly exported. This led to India's self-sufficiency as regards her food and cloth requirements and we find a contented and prosperous population. Famines hardly occurred. However with the British connection the country's economy was harnessed in the interests of the foreign power and raw materials became the chief item in her export trade. This resulted in recurring famines and decrease in the value of the Indian Rupee. The following figures * show the correctness of the statement :—

11the	century	...	2 famines
13th	century	...	1 „
15th	„	...	2 „
16th	„	...	3 „
17th	„	...	3 „
18th	„	...	4 „

* Lallubhai Shamaldas quoted by Dr. Pattabhi in 'Some Fundamentals of Indian Problem" p. 74

18th	„	1st 25 years	5	„	(10 lacs died)
19th	„	2nd 25 „	2	„	(2 „ „)
19th	„	3rd 25 „	6	„	(50 „ „)
19th	„	4th 25 „	18	„	(2½ corores)
20th	(up to 1943 Bengal famine)		2	„	(50 lacs died)

The Bazar rate of India from 1700 to 1919 (Seer per Rupee

Year	Rice	Dal	Wheat	Jowar	Ghee
1700	70	60	30	—	4
1725	45	30	22	—	4½
1750	50	35	18	—	3¾
1775	27	36	36	—	2½
1800	38	58	36	—	3½
1825	40	55	36	—	3½
1850	28	35	45	78	3
1875	28	35	21	30	2½
1900	13	18	15	22	2½
1919	5	5	7	13	5/8

The world depression during next decade affected the prices of above food grains; otherwise there was no remarkable fluctuation till World War II when the prices again began to sore up and this upward tendency is still not yet checked.

The engal famine of 1943 is yet another addition to the above imposing list of famines. The value of rupee during the war period between 1939–45 saw a still further precipitate decline and it is clear that it has not yet reached the bottom level. The British connexion has brought India to such a pass.

Now that we are freed of foreign strangulation, shall we achieve economic prosperity? The answer is: it will not be necessarily so. For foreign domination was just one of the major obstacles in the way of our economic progress. There are others equally important. One of them is the spirit which pervades our economic life. The consideration of this point brings us to the real isue.

The end of all economic activities is the legitimate satisfaction of a man's necessities of life and these do vary with individuals and peoples. The invention of money was to facilitate easy exchange and transport of commodities. For a long time after its invention and use, it did not acquire the additional importance as a denomination of person's wealth which was always considered in terms of land, cattle, land-produce and other actual goods. But, with the economic life becoming more intricate, wealth was equated with money and acquisition of money—only a means of exchange became the chief motive behind the economic activities of society; and ultimately it so dominated the economic life that the profit idea became the pivot of economic life. Profit motive was the chief dominating consideration with the modern industrialists who took to intensive production not with the ultimate object of satisfying the wants of the community but acquiring profits irrespective of the ill-effects of the system in terms of human misery.

In the social order that we envisage to have in Free India, shall we submit to this profit-motive that has enslaved workers in the factories and tillers on the field to a handful of the better-placed by birth and fortune? Unless the old economic structure is replaced by a new one in which

no scope is left for profit-motive and economic exploitation is abolished by law, our independence will be a shadow independence in which "free" people will be submitted to the economic slavery as hithertofore. In that case the political independence that we have been successful in achieving will lose all its significance to the vast masses and the unjustifiable economic "weightage" in favour of a microscopic section of the community will have its reaction on the rest and will be a source of constant friction between them which will hamper the progress of the country. India will be called upon to take a quick decision in the matter

There is yet another sort of social inequity though not very peculiar to India alone. We have a dead weight of centuries of traditions around our neck and because of that we connot make much progress in establishing social equity and justice. We have been treating millions of our follow-men as slaves—as a sub-human race. This will, of course, have to go and there are already signs that in India there will be no enslavement and discrimination against the present day low-placed section of the community—the Harijans, the backward tribes etc. But mere legislation in this respect does not end the problem; for this discrimination may be preserved under some other garb and the harmony that we aim at will be torpedoed at the very beginning of our endeavour. Certain sections of mankind still find it very difficult to break away with ideas of their racial superiority. The myth of the German "master-race" and even glorifying the Teutonic race as super-human has had an irresistible fascination for the German people and that had disasterous results on the whole mankind. Even in such advanced and 'democratic' nation as the U.S.A. appeal to the racial superiority finds

an echo in the hearts of the white population. The Negro population there is still subjected to harassment, if not by law, still by usage. The treatment meted out to Indian nationals and the native population in South Africa displays the same racial arrogance and superiority. Lip-service is, however, paid in all these countries to the ideal of race-equality and abolition of distinctions imposed on account of difference in race. The democratic ideals together with the spirit of our times demand that racial discrimination shall once for all be abolished and human dignity be restored to those who are traditionally deprived of it. But there is a vast deal of difference between preaching and practice and though the spirit of equality shall ultimately triumph, we will have to make conscious efforts to imbibe that spirit in us. So long as we are for perpetuation of caste-system and its incumbersome results, we shall have no moral right to condemn other nations for their persistence in discriminating between race and race. The principle of racial equality does not, of course, denote that every human being is physically or intellectually or mentally or spiritually equal or that by the abolition of racial discrimination he can be made so. That is fantastic and beyond human power. But it does mean an equal opportunity for all racial groups to make their own development and abolition of all restrictions that have been imposed on them so long and made their economic, social, cultural, and intellectual progress impossible. Given an opportunity, each group can rise to its full height in all spheres of life and remain at the same time in harmonious relations with the rest. The backwardness of any group in the present day world will act as a check on the advance and progress of others. So it is in the interest of all groups and races that all discrimination should

immediately put an end to and full scope for development according to the genius of a particular group or race be given to it.

To bring about racial equality in India we shall have to make great exertions and overcome prejudices of centuries. But we have certain advantages on our side which will make this task easy of achievement. For the last two centuries we have been subjected to discriminations and indignities in every conceivable way. This has had a sobering effect on us and brought to light in a convincing manner the indignities and discriminations that we ourselves have been practising and still practise against our less-enlightened brethren.

The Asiatic Conference held in January, 1947 in New Delhi is a step towards this goal. Like India, other nations in Asia have also been subjected to the domination of the West. The whole of Asia has now awakened from its torpor and India occupies a leading role in this rejuvenation of the East. One World is the ideal for mankind if it is to escape from man-made miseries and devastations. But regional federations of independent states must precede the World State into which all these federations will finally merge. Asiatic Conference was a step in the right direction from this point of view. India must take a keen interest in developing friendly relations with her Asiatic neighbour States and establish economic and cultural relations with them. Such regional federations of nations of homogeneous culture will eliminate the possibility of friction between them and will very likely be conducive to establish harmoneous relations among all of them. India is more fitted for this task because of her spiritual inheritage. Indian leaders of thought had always placed more emphasis on the spiritual

aspect of human life than the material one and all the social relations in ancient times were based on moral and ethical ideas. Ethics, as a science, was a system of principles on which a man was expected to act. All the actions of an individual must have a reference to his surroundings as well as to himself and the individual must ascertain what is good in relation to those who form his surroundings as well as in relation to the time and place. All his activities must be based on principles of morality the ultimate object of which is to bring about happiness by establishing harmoneous relations between individuals that make up a community, between communities that make up a nation and between nations that make up the whole of mankind. The nations of the world were blind to these principles of morality in their relations with one another. India, however, has always been craving for the establishment of such a harmoneous relationship and though she has miserably failed to produce any tangible results yet she is the only nation that can again boldly undertake new experiments with a will to conquer all obstacles and achieve success. She has the will, the spirit, the motive force and the ability required for such a noble undertaking and whatever her past failures she has never wavered in her faith in the nobleness of humanity and given up all hope. India is either the cradle or the playground of all important religions in the world and this is not just an accident of history. The very soil of Indian thought and philosophy is suitable for the germination and growth of new religious and philosophical ideals. India has never been a country in which regidity of thoght was superimposed as in the west. The Hindu philosophy includes in its fold 'Shad-Darshans' (six philosophical systems) ranging from Non-dualism to Atheism and

the Materialism of Charvaka. Full scope was given to the development of every system and not even a single instance of persecution on account of difference in philosophical outlook can ever be found in Indian history. Not so in the West. In the Middle Ages in almost all countries of Europe the Jews were harassed and persecuted. The Catholics and the Protestants were always antagonistic to one another and wherever they could procure State aid they lost no opportunity to suppress one another. Happily this was not so in India and this single fact must speak in favour of this country. In India religious persecution was not resorted to as in the West and in the latter historical period when certain Muslim rulers took themselves to religious persecution they received such tremendeous opposition that their very political existence came in jeopardy.

The absence of religious persecution and her spiritual traditions entitle India to play a leading role in the re-construction of a new World Social Order. The West has miserably failed because it lacked the faith in what it preached. When the Allies were fighting the forces of Nazism they had clearly set forth their war aims before the world. The principal Allies, England and America pledged themselves to what is known as the "Atlantic Charter" which stated that:—

1. They (the Allies) do not seek territorial aggrandizement.

2. They do not wish to make any territorial changes that do not respond to the wishes of the people.

3. They respect the rights of all countries to choose freely their form of government, and wish to see restored

the sovereignties and self-government taken away by force.

4. Big and little countries will have access to the raw material of the world.

5. All countries should collaborate economically to better the standard of work, the economic progress and the social security of all.

6. When the Nazi tyranny has disappeared, a peace will be established among the nations so that man can live without fear and without want.

7. The peace will give the right to sail freely on all the seas and oceans of the world.

8. A system of collective security will abolish force and arrange for disarmament.

The Charter in itself was very attractive and roused hopes in the down-trodden of the world. But the chief difficulty as always happens, was its practical application. High principles and broad programmes always excite zeal and hope. But the trouble begins when we start putting these principles and programmes into practice. Mr. Churchill declared that the Charter was not applicable to India. This was rightly construed to mean that the imperialists did not want to loosen their strangling hold on India. However the British people in general disagreed with Churchill's policy and renounced him as their leader.

India should never be liable to such a discrepency in her professions and practice. It might happen that the cause of the down-trodden, the lowly would receive no sympathy and freedom which is won by the common sufferings of all would be denied to them. But our very past traditions

will eventually force us to renounce these ways of the West and all our attempts will be directed towards establishing social equity and freedom for all. This freedom translated into actual life would mean the following to an individual:

1. A well-balanced diet;
2. Sufficient clothing;
3. A house to live in;
4. Educational facilities;
5. Medical aid:
6. Freedom from unemployment & security of service.

These are the minimum necessities of an individual to supply which must be the immediate task of the Government of Free India. Without the satisfaction of these needs of an individual who expects these things of the Government which he has put in power, the achievement of political freedom will lose all significance and the cause of democracy —not only political but also economic and social—will suffer a heavy set-back and the political freedom that is achieved will ultimately concentrate in the hands of those who constitute the financial hierarchy in the country to purge which must be the immediate objective of democratic forces in the country. The needs of a common man are very simple. In the words of the late President Roosevelt: "There is nothing mysterious about the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy. The basic things expected by our people of their political and economic systems are simple. They are :—

Equality of opportunity for youth and for others.

Jobs for those who can work.

Security for those who need it.

The ending of special privilege for the few.

The preservation of civil liberties for all.

The enjoyment of the fruits of the scientific progress in a wider and constantly rising standard of living."

President Roosevelt was thinking in terms of democracy not confined to any particular area. His aim was to base a new world order on freedoms for all. He said :—

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want— which translated into world terms, means economic uuderstandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour—anywhere in the world.

The envisaging of a new social order in India based on obove freedoms will be a most difficult job. We shall have to do much spade-work before we can make appreciable progress in any field. The chief problem that clamours for immediate solution is the problem of food. India mainly is an agriculture country and almost eighty per cent of her population depends on agriculture. Yet agriculture is the most neglected subject and we are witnessing a phenomenon of an agricultural country with her teeming millions underfed and always on the verge of starvation. It is estimated that nearly 3.5 crores of people in India do not know what a square meal is all through the year. The present crisis in food situation is due to the following three reasons:—

1. Vagaries of the Monsoon.
2. Impoverished state of agrarian land.
3. The growing largely of commercial crops viz. Cotton. Jute and Oilseeds.

We are helpless in respect of the first as we are entirely at the mercy of Nature. Yet we can make use of modern science and obtain control over nature to some extent. We have neglected irrigation so long and this neglect has caused many a famine in India. We shall have now to undertake extensive irrigation schemes if we aim at self-sufficiency in our food requirements. As regards the second reason there is much scope for increasing the productive capacity of land under cultivation by way of supplying artificial manures to the Indian agriculturists. The third reason is in fact artificial and it is a result of our own economic policy, that has favoured the cultivation of money crops such as jute and

cotton and oil-seeds. The high prices of Jute and Cotton induce cultivators in the Jute and cotton growing areas to cultivate these crops in preference to food grains. K. L. Datt observes,

> "Another effect of this increased cultivation of the commercial crops on the food supply of the country has been that the best lands available are applied towards that cultivation, while the cultivation of food grains is relegated to some extent to inferior lands, the yield of which even in normal years is much less. Wheat land in the North West provinces which now gives only 840 lbs. an acre yielded 1140 lbs. in Akbar's time."

The Indian agriculturist is tempted to cultivate cotton and Jute because they fetch him more prices. As a result, total acreage under food crops has decreased resulting in a countrywide food shortage. To increase our food grain production we shall have to bring more land under cultivation and also try to undertake intensive cultivation to obtain more yield per acre than what it is today. This may be achieved by making use of modern agricultural implements such as tracters; but their use brings us to another difficulty. In India land is divided into small holdings and therefore it will be uneconomic to use tracters unless we take to agricultural collectivism. The National Government will have boldly to solve these problems. In certain areas the Government should undertake a programme of agricultural reforms including collective farming on a voluntary basis. The Indian peasant will be perhaps, in the beginning, suspicious about the Government's ultimate intentions. But a National Government composed of trusted leapers of the people will

ultimately succeed in removing all suspicions and fears entertained by the peasantry and within a very short time it will be able to show the comparative advantages of collective farming. Once the initial opposition is overcome, the Government can resort to nationalisation of land under which scheme farmers can become sharers in the total land produce. Nationalisation will lead to the betterment of soil and more yield of foodgrains per acre. At present due to small proprietory holdings and old methods of cultivation we have less yield of foodgrains per acre than what it is in other countries of the world. The following table gives the comparative figures;-

Crop Yields Per Acre in Pounds Avoirdupois.

Country	Rice	Wheat
India	1,357	652
Japan	2,767	1508
Egypt	2,356	1688
U. S. A.	2,112	973
Italy	4601	1241
Germany	——	1740
United Kingdom ...	——	1812

("Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations," 1932-33)

The natsonalisation of land in India will make it possible to increase the present low yield of rice and wheat per acre. The use of tractor becomes uneconomic and gives no satisfactory results unless it is used on vast stretches of land. Nationalisation will make possible the use of tractors because present small holdings will be abolished and replaced by collective farming. There is yet

another advantage of nationalising land. The present poverty of the Indian agriculturist is due to the Zamindari system which prevailed almost everywhere in India, but especially in the North. Most of the agricultural produce of the peasant goes to the landlord in payment of his rent, debts etc. and a very small portion of it is left with the cultivator. The following figures show the number of non-cultivating landlords, cultivators and agricultural labourers:

	[illegible]	[illegible]
Non-cultivating landlords	[illegible]	[illegible]
Cultivators (owners of land)	74·6	[illegible]
Agricultural labourers	21·7	[illegible]

These figures show the following position in the Punjab. There is an increase in the non-cultivating landlords who depend for their [illegible] on rents paid by the tenants. On the other hand there is a decrease in the peasant proprietors while the figure for agricultural labourers shows an increase by about 12 millions. Nationalisation of land will abolish the parasite class of landlords while the peasants interest in the present agricultural system will change. It starts with the produce of the lands on which they work. The [illegible] National Government will have to take to this revolutionary agriculture policy if present agricultural debacle is to be ended and India is to be turned into a land described by Kautilya as "Sujala, Suphalam".

Industries

The Karachi resolution of the Congress (1931) has laid down the policy of the Congress with regard to Indian Basic

Heavy Industries. According to this resolution the Congress is bound to follow a policy of nationalisation of these industries which include Textile Mills, Iron and Steel works and Cement, Oil Power, Motor Car and Aeroplane Industries. The State must take over these industries as it has already taken over Indian Railways. By nationalising these industries the exploitation of the industrial workers will end and they will be paid higher wages, provided with better working conditions and guaranteed security of work, sickness leave, bonus and other amenities. Banking and insurance business will also require to be nationalised as these concerns provide the necessary finance to other heavy industries and therefore occupy a key-position in capitalist economy.

At present there is an unhealthy competition between the cottage-industries and mechanised industry. The National Government will first have to take steps to end this competition in the interest of millions of workers employed in cottage industries.

In India 13 per cent of the population are literate. This is in sad contrast with other countries where literacy percentage is very high. In Japan it is almost 90 per cent while in Soviet Russia it is 87 per cent. Before the October Revolution in 1917, Russian literacy percentage was very low. But in 1920 it increased to 48 per cent. Similarly in India the National Government will have to make education free and popular and give State-aid to it with a view to make every person literate, at least in his own mother tongue. Unless this is done it will be very difficult to improve the general cultural standard of the common man in India. The Sergent

Commission estimated that it will take about 52 years to achieve the goal of cent per cent literacy and the cost estimated for it is Rs. 317 crores. However, India cannot afford such a huge amount and also cannot wait for so long a period. A system of compulsory rural classes must be introduced in order to make every petson literate in rural areas. This will require a large teaching staff and the Government must make provision for it by making it compulsory for students appearing for Matriculation and dgree examinations to spend one year on this literary drive without which they will not be permitted to appear for their examinations. This will at once bring about a decrease in the heavy expediture contemplated by the Sergent Scheme and also enormously increase the literacy percentage.

In our Secondary schools and higher university education English must be replaced by local languages and predominance given to our lingua franca, Hindi. The Wardha Scheme of Basic Education is suitable for rural areas and education may be imparted through this Scheme in these areas. The present system of education differentiates between brain and brawn; while the Basic Scheme co-ordinates between the two and it will produce better citizens more fitted to undertake the heavy responsibilities in future India.

Village-Improvement.

India is subject to recurrent famines and epidemics and the general health of her people is of very low standard due to lack of proper balanced diet and medical aid. They always fall an easy prey to any epidemic. When our food problem is solved as mentioned above one cause of epidemics will be removed; but we shall have yet to provide for

medical aid without which we cannot successfully combat the recurring epidemics. Another important aspect of the matter is the very low standard of sanitation obtained in villages and towns. A typical Indian village is merely a heap of dust with mud-huts unfit for human habitation. To convert these villages into modern ones with good water-supply and people trained into sanitary habits is the first step in the direction of any village-improvement scheme.

The re-organisation of our social structure will be difficult to accomplish if besides the above some other basic problems are not boldly faced and solved. For example, there is the problem of India's national language and script which threatens to a create split even among the progressives in India. Some ultra-modern theorists suggest that preference should be given to the Roman script at the sacrifice of Devanagari and Arabic scripts. But this is an impractable suggestion which completely disregards the Indian sestiment. Turkey has done away with her script because it was imperfect and hindered the progress of an average man and woman. In the Roman script they found a medium to reach the masses. But in India we have a script which is the most perfect in the world and a language which is understood by millions in India. Hindi, written in Devanagari, is the only language that is entitled to be India's lingua franca. Hindi is already in usage in Central and Northern India and in the rest of the country it is easily understood. Free India cannot retain a foreign language either for her domestic or international purposes for the adoption of a foreign language and srcipt will betray a slave mentality and not only lower India's national prestige but also hinder her progress. In the past two centuries the English language could reach only the fringe of the Indian society and the masses could never adopt it.

The other claimant for national language is Urdu but its script is incomeplete and as it is understood by a very few people even among the Muslims its claim can no longer be seriously regarded. The national language must serve the purpose of becoming a medium of instruction for mass enlightenment and it is only Hindi written in Devanagari script that can serve this purpose.

Allied with the problem of language is the problem of linguistic provinces. The provinces, as they are to-day in India, are in the nature of an accident of history and are in no respect separate cultural and linguistic entities. The present provinces must be reconstituted on linguistic basis for language is a most unifying force and all progress is assured where the people speaking one language are welded into a seperate political entity. But at present the reorganisation of provinces is presenting some difficulties which will require tactful handling. The people speaking a common language are at present divided into diffrent provinces and States and the amalgamation of the areas where they reside into one province would be constitutionaly a difficult job. For a section of the people of each language group reside in Indias States which cannot be forced to give up their territtories to facilitate the formation of new linguistic provinces. For example, besides innumerable small States that they reside in, the Marathi speaking people are divided into the Bombay Province, the Central provinces and the Hyderabad State. Similarly the people of Andhra are divided into the Province of Madras and the Hyderabad State. The problem of linguistc provinces, thus, brings us face to face with the problem of Indian States–the relics of medieval India and the stronghold of Indian reaction. They are geogrophically contiguous with

'British' India and polically and culturally form part and parcel of the Indian nation. They do not fit in the new political set-up and their preservation as seperate and sovereign politiacal entities is harmful and very dangerous to the progress of the nation. It is a historical necessity that all of these States, big and small, without a single exception be amalgamated into the Indian body politic. It is with their amaglama. that some of the outstanding problems, such as the problem of our linguistic provinces, can be solved and progress in various other directions also made easier. Industrialisation can be planned only on an all-India basis. Mineral resources of the country can only be fully exploited if India as a whole is considered a single political unit. Educational, economic and all other planning can be done also only on an all-India basis. Amalgamation of Indian States into the rest of India is thus a historical necessity and it must be recognised and given effect to if we are determined to achieve progress in all directions to better the lot of a common man and woman in India.

We cannot achieve our goal of Peace and Prosperity in isolation from our neighbours and other States in the world. All the States in the world are interdependent and economic backwardness or political disturbance in one State immediately affects the rest of the world. This has been amply proved, to our shame and sorrow, by two successive world wars. So long India was offered seats on international bodies only to soothe the Indian sentiment. But her vote invariably went with the British imperialists and she could not make her voice heard on an international platform. Her 'representatives' were always the yes-men of British imperialism which could unhesitatingly rely on them for support. With the achievement of independence India now is able to

send only those persons abroad who are really capable of representing India and raise her prestige in the eyes of other nations. But more than personalities counts the foreign policy India is going to pursue.

The world to-day is divided into two contending groups and sooner than later, it is feared, the differences between these two groups will precipitate a grave crisis towards which even to-day the world is fearfully heading. The clash represents a clash not between nations but between political and economic idealogies. Which shall ultimately prevail in the world—a political system that upholds and perpetuates economic exploitation of the toiling masses by a handful of the capitalists who own and control the means of production or that political system and organisation which has been successful in one-sixth part of the world in dealing a death blow to the economic exploitation of the masses, and removing for ever the fear of unemployment and insecurity—a system that has banned private ownership of the means of production so that when socially owned they can be better utilized for the common weal of the community and not for the good of a very insignificant section of it? Which side will India choose? Or can she remain neutral? India cannot remain neutral for neutrality in such a conflict is tantamount to extending moral support to the reactionary forces in the world. And yet India's participation in yet another global conflict may completely shatter her economy which is already in a ruinous state due to the last World War. India, therefore, will have to be very scrupulous in her international relations, always keeping in view her own national interests as well as offering support to the democratic and progressive world forces.

On our ability to solve the problems confronting the nation depends the future of our unborn generations. Hard times and trying cirumstances are in store for us. But through tireless perseverence, hard toil, tanacity and faith in our future we will be able to realise an India visualised by the late Rabindranath Tagore, the Poet Laureate of the East.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by Thee into ever-widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

POST-SCRIPT.

August 15, 1947 will always be remembered as a day of fulfilment and hope and also of sorrow and shame in the long period of India's struggle for emancipation. For it was on this day that the sixty-year old movement for national emancipation saw all its efforts crowned with success and the country become entirely free of foreign influence, the chosen representatives of the nation assuming all sovereign power for the governance of the country. And yet the feeling of joy and hope that throbbed every patriotic heart that day was not an unmixed feeling; for was it not also on this day that this ancient land of ours was vivisected and a death-blow dealt to our centuries-old deep-rooted belief in the poitical unity of the country? The political freedom that was achieved was a triumph of our democratic movement guided and led for the last quarter of a century by our most noble, trusted and beloved leader—the Father of the Indian Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. For it was he who two decades back put a new life into our national movement, gave it a mass-character and built it into a strong, democratic movement of liberation, joined by the vast masses of the Indian people irrespective of their caste or creed—a movement that created heroes out of clay and gave a new hope to our down-trodden people—the movement that boldly challenged the alien rule in the country. The political independence achieved was a recognition of the growing strength of this movement which it became impossible for the British imperialists any longer to suppress. But the sorrow and the shame of our political undertanding and emancipation movement was that our independence was achieved at the cost of the historic unity of the nation that was India—a pride of our people throughout centuries of our history. Division of the country was bad enough and declared lack of foresight and statesman-

ship on the part of our leadership. But the shame of it was that the division of the country and the creation of a new, sovereign State of Pakistan on western and eastern borders of India left a legacy of hatred and mutual suspicion and much ill-will on both sides. When the need for good-will and understanding and unity was greatest, when the darkness that surrounded us, when the heavy responsibilities that devolved on us, demanded of us a high sense of duty and charity in action, we disgraced the fair name of our ancient and noble land by withrawing ourselves, on both sides, into the narrow communal grooves, forgetting our noble traditions of tolerance, sympathy and generosity. Consequent upon the division of the country and more especially the unnatural division of the Punjab, it became painfully evident to both the Governments that the minority problem to solve which the division was effected became all the more acute and assumed the character of a priority number one problem. For the minorities in both the States found it no longer possible to continue to live in their ancient homelands and particularly in the Punjab, inspite of the solemn assurances given by the men in authority, the communal passions were so much roused and so very little respect was paid to life and property and innocence of children and honour of women, that the whole Governmental machinery collapsed and the mob rule prevailed so that men, women and children belonging to the minority communities in both the parts of the Punjab were butchered like so many sheep, women publicly dishonoured and property greedily looted. The beast in man triumphed and human dignity was utterly disregarded. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children were mercilessly killed in the Punjab communal carnage and forces of law and order proved incapable of

giving protection to those who were in imminent danger of their lives. The Governments of India and Pakistan had ultimately to plan the wholesale transfer of population and remove the minorities to places of safety. It is estimated that almost five millions of people belonging to either community were thus removed from their ancient homes and hearths and became 'refugees' in their own country. In the history of nations there is no parallel for the up-rooting of a people, on such a tremendous scale, from their ancient soil.

The transfer of population has created serious problems with which both the Governments would find it very difficult to deal. It has transplanted millions of people into new regions distant from their homelands, where climatic and other conditions of life are different from those with which they were associated not only for generations but centuries together. Their re-habilitation and re-settlement is more a problem of psycological than economic nature. The refugees are an embittered and disillusioned people and they view their up-roothing as a result of communal virus that has eaten deep into the heart of the Indian body politic. Their present plight and horrible conditions of life helped to spread the poison of communal hatred in both the Dominions and chances of an amicable settlement of all the outstanding problems became all the more remote. There is always the possibility of friction between two Governments over some point or other and all such controversies have a tendency, under present peculiar conditions, to assume communal tinge and therefore all the more cloud real issues.

After partition, the effective but tactfnl handling of the States problem goes to credit of the Indian Government.

Except for the State of Hyderabad, all States have joined the Indian Union and though at present there is some hitch over the accession of the States of Junagad and Kashmir and Jammu, the Indian Government's assurance that in the matter of these accessions they will be guided by the freely expressed will of the peoples of the States concerned makes the position quite clear and refutes the charge that the Indian Government undemocratically interferes with the sovereign character of States administration. For in the first place it must be recogniged that all authority even in States is derived from people and the heads of the present administration, i, e, the ruling Princes, can have on choice in the matter as to whether the State should join this or that Dominion or remain exclusively independent. It would be undemocratic if the Princes are allowed to influence the decision of the people. Most of the Princes have recognised the strength of the democratic movement in their States and have quitely agreed to accession to the Indian Union. However welcome as their accession to the Indian Union is, it should not be forgotten that it has exposed India to a very subtle danger. During two centuries of British regime the Princes were preserved as stooges and henchmen of British imperialism and it will be hard for them to shake off overnight this character of theirs; for their interest lies in helping imperialism and reaction. The Indian Government and more especially the people of the Indian Union, including the States, will have to be vigilant so that foreign dominion does not enter through the back-door of Princely autocracy or the prevalent communalism, fanned and supported directly or indirectly, by some of the leading Princes so that the democratic movement of the people will be directed not against

them to end their autocracy but towards the minority community so that people will always remain dis-united and communal strife perpetuared.

The virus of communalism has so very badly poisoned the minds of the people that they have almost lost their ability of clear thinking and going to the root-cause of the current problems that endanger India's internal peace and her newly won freedom. And there are elements in the country who are willing and shrewd enough to take the advantage of present sad state of affairs and exploit people's sentiment for their own sectarian purposes and these might form an unholy alliance to halt the Indian people's onward march towards peace and progress and defeat the very goal of their movement which is the abolition of every form of exploitation. In the midst of the dreadful and horrible holocaust of communal massacres that occurred in the wake of the division of the country, these reactionary elements in both India and Pakistan came forward as champions of one community against the other and the people fell an easy victim to the machinations of these forces, forgetting that the course they were following would endanger their heroically won freedom, be ultimately ruinous to their own interests, disgrace the fair name of the country and lower its prestige abroad.

Enemies of the people must be unmasked if the country is to be saved from the virus of communalism which is slowly but surely leading the people to the belief that war between Pakistan and Indian Union is inevitable. Any such war at this critical juncture in our history would be disastrous and in the event of it the same fate that has overtaken China would also overtake this country. We must not forget that

imparialist powers are interested in promoting such a civil strife; for then they can re-enter Indian political arena and act as arbiters of India's destiny. We must be vigilant and never allow this to happen. We are proud that the freedom that we have won is a unique achievement for it was won through struggles based on non-violence and truth. We must not discard these basic principles of our struggle for it is in the interest of the country and world at large that we adhere to these principles so that peace and harmony will be established amongst nations.

We must ourselves renew the following pledge taken by our representatives in the Constituent Assembly on Aug. 15, 1947.

> "At this solemn moment when the people of India, through suffering and sacrifice, have secured freedom, I,.....do dedicate myself in all humility to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to :the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind"

MAHATMA GANDHI'S ASSASSINATION

The most unbelievable, the most horrid and the most hideous crime that even a worst perverted imagination ever could conceive of was actually committed in New Delhi, the Capital of India, on Jan. 30, 1948. Gandhiji was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic. The greatest leader of a great people—the Apostle of Truth and Non-Violence—fell victim to the bullets of a mad Indian. The news of this assassination broadcast on the same night, was received in shame and horror in every household in India. His death was truly a personal bereavement for millions and millions in India and abroad. For he was a world citzen who dedicated his life to Peace to be achieved through Truth and Non-Violence and Love. He, who was a symbol of our ancient and most glorious culture, fell martyr to the cause of communal amity. His soul cannot rest in peace unless we, who are left behind, pledge ourselves anew to bring about communal amity in India-the cause he espoused all through his life. Gandhiji has gone and joined the Eternal and as India pays her last tributes to him, the nation must to a man resolve to follow faithfully the principles dearer to him than his own life.

Feb. 12, 1948

APPENDIX A.

Cripps' Proposals

His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of promises made in regard to the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realization of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion associated with the United Kingdom and other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic and external affairs.

His Majesty's Government therefore make the following declaration:

(a) Immediately upon cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India in manner described hereafter an elected body charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for participation of Indian States in the constitution-making boby.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to:

(i) The right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitution, to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides.

With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new constitution giving them the same full status as the Indian Union and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.

(ii) The signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it will make provision, in accordance with undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in future its relationship to other member States of the British Commonwealth.

Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the constitution it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its treaty arrangements so far as this may be required in the new situation.

(d) The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities.

Immediately upon the result being known of provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of Porvincial legislatures shall as a single electoral college proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in

number about 1/10th of the number of the electoral electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion as to their total population as in the case of representatives of British India as a whole and with the same powers as British Indian members.

(e) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain the control and direction of the Defence of India as part of their world war effort but the task of organizing to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India.

APPENDIX B.

Statement by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy

(May 16, 1946.)

1. On March 15, just before the despatch of the cabinet Delegation to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words:—

"My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of Government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision."

* * *

"I hope that India and her people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that they will find great advantages in doing so."

* * *

"But if she does so elect, it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If, on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has the right to do so. It will be for us to make the transitition as soon and easy as possible."

* * *

2. Charged in these historic words, we—the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy—have done our utmost to assist the

two main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of unity or division of India. After prolonged discussions in New Delhi, we succeeded in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in conference at Simla. There was a full exchange of views and both parties were prepared to make considerable concessions in order to try and seek a settlement but it ultimately proved impossible to close the gap between the parties and so no agreement could be concluded. Since no agreement has been reached, we feel that it is our duty to put forward what we consider the best arrangement possible to ensure a speedy setting up of a new constitution. This Statement is made with the full approval of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

Interim Government

3. We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future constitution of India and an Interim Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such a time as a new constitution can be brought into being. We have endeavoured to be just to the smaller as well as to the larger sections of the people ; and to recommend a solution which will lead to a practicable way of governing the India of the future, and will give a sound basis for defence and good opportunity for progess in the social, political and economic field.

4. It is not intended to review the voluminous evidence that has been submitted to the Mission ; but it is right that we should state that it has shown almost an universal desire, outside the supporters of the Muslim League for the unity of India.

5. This consideration did not, however, deter us from examining closely and impartially the possibility of partition of India; since we were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu majority rule.

This feeling has become so strong and widespread among the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards. If there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion and economic or other interests.

6. We, therefore, examined in the first instance the question of a separate and fully independent Sovereign State of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League. Such a Pakistan would comprise two areas; one in the North West consisting of the Provinces of the Punjab, Sind, N.W.F.P. and British Baluchistan; the other in the North East consisting of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam. The League were prepared to consider the adjustment of boundaries at a later stage, but insisted that the principle of Pakistan should first be acknowledged.

The argument for the separate State of Pakistan was based, first, upon the right of the Muslim majority to decide their method of government according to their wishes, and, secondly, upon the necessity to include substantial areas in which Muslims are in a minority in order to make Pakistan administratively and economically workable.

The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the whole of six Provinces enumerated above

would be very considerable as the following figures * show:-

North-Western Area	Muslims	Non-Muslims
Punjab —	16,217,242	12,201,577
N. W. F. Province —	2,788,797	249,270
Sind —	3,208,325	1,326,683
British Baluchistan —	438,930	62,701
	23,653,294	13,840,231
	62.07%	37.93%
North-Eastern Area		
Bengal —	33,005,434	27,301,091
Assam —	3,442,479	6,762,254
	36,447,913	34,063,345
	51.69 p.c.	48.31 p.c.

The Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some twenty million dispersed amongst a total population of 188 million.

Pakistan Impracticable

These figures show that the setting up of a separate Sovereign State of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan can equally in our view be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs.

* All population figures in this statement are from the most recent Census taken in 1941.

7. We, therefore, considered whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan confined to the Muslim majority areas alone might be a possible basis for compromise. Such a Pakistan is regarded by the Muslim League as quite impracticable because it would entail the exclusion from Pakistan of (a) whole of the Ambala and Jullunder divisions in the Punjab (b) the whole of Assam except the district of Sylhet; and (c) a large part of Western Bengal including Calcutta in which city the Muslims form 23. 6 % of the population. We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and the Bengal as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and a long history and tradition. Moreover any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide the Sikhs leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundaries. We have, therefore, been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign State of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution of the communal problem.

8 Apart from the great force of the forgoing arguments, there are weighty administrative, economic, and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a united India. To disintegret them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for a united defence is even stronger. The Indian armed forces have been built up as a whole for the defence of India as a whole and to break them in two would inflict a deadly blow on the long tradition and high degree of efficiency of the Indian Army and would entail the gravest dangers. The Indian

Navy and the Indian Air Force would become much less effective. The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.

9. A further consideraton of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with a divided British India.

10. Finally, there is the geographical fact that the two halves of the proposed Pakistan State are separated by some 700 miles and communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan.

11. We are, therefore, unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign States.

Congress case.

12. This decision does not, however, blind us to the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture, and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must be a dominating element. To meet this, the Congress has put forward a scheme under which Provinces would have full autonomy subject only to a minimum of Central subjects, such as Foreign Affairs, Defence and communications.

Under this scheme Provinces, if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale, could

cede to the Centre optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above.

13. Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages aud anomalies. It would be very difficult to work a Central Executive and Legislature in which some Ministers who dealt with compulsory subjects were responsible to the whole of India, while other Ministers who dealt with optional subjects, would be reponsible only to those Provinces which had elected to act together in respect of such subjects. This difficulty would be accentuated in the Central Legislature, where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their Provinces were not concerned were under discussion.

Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme, we do not consider that it would be fair to deny to other Provinces, which did not desire to take the optional subjects at the Centre, the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be no more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way.

14. Before putting forward our recommendations we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with the attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has existed between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new Government.

This fact has been fully recognised by those whom we interviewed from the States. They have at the same time assured us that the States are ready and willing to co-operate in the new development of India. The precise form which their co-operation will take must be a matter for negotiation during the building up of the new constitutional structure and it by no means follows that it will be identical for all the States. We have not, therefore, dealt with the States in the same detail as the Provinces of British India in the paragraphs which follow.

We now indicate the nature of a solution which in our view would be just to the essential claims of all the parties and at the same time be more likely to bring about a stable and practicable form of constitution of India.

Six Major Proposals

15. We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form—

(i) There should be a Union of India, embracing both British India and States, which should deal with the following subjects:- Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications; and should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.

ii) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from British Indian and States' representatives. Any question raising a major communal issue should require for its decision a majority of representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting.

iii) All subjects other than the Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces.

iv) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

v) Provinces should be free to form Groups with the executives and legislatures and each Group could determine the Provincial subjects to be taken in common.

iv) The constitutions of the Union and Groups should contain a provision whereby the Province could by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

16. It is not our object to lay out the details of a constitution on the above lines, but to set in motion the machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians.

It has been necessary, however, for us to make this recommendation as to the broad basis of the future constitution because it became clear to us in the course of our negotiations that not until that had been done was there any hope of getting the two major communities to join in the setting up of a constitution-making machinery.

Constituent Assembly

17. We now indicate the constitution-making machinery which we propose should be brought into being forthwith in order to enable a new constitution to be worked out.

18. In forming any Assembly to decide a new constitutional structure, the first problem is to obtain as broad-based and acurate a representation of the whole population as is possible. The most satisfactory method obviously would be

by election based on adult franchise; but any attempt to introduce such a step would lead to a wholly unacceptable delay in the formulation of the new Constitution. The only practicable alternative is to utilise the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as the electing bodies.

There are, however, two factors in their composition which make this difficult. First, the numerical strengths of the Provincial Legislative Assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each Province. Thus Assam with a population of ten millions has a Legislative Assembly of 108 members, while Bengal with a population six times as large has an Assembly of only 250. Secondly owing to the weightage given to minorities by the Communal Award, the strengths of several communities in each Provincial Legislative Assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the Province. Thus the number of seats reserved for Muslims in the Bengal Legislative Assembly is only 48 p. c. of the total although they form 55 p. c. of the Provincial population. After a most careful consideration of the various methods by which these inequalities might be corrected, we have come to the conclusion that the fairest and most practical plan would be—

(a) to allot to each Province a total number of seats proportional to its population, roughly in the ratio of one to a million, as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage;

(b) to divide this Provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each Province in proportion to their population;

(c) to provide that the representatives allotted to each community in a Province shall be elected by the members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognise only three main communities in India: General, Muslim, and Sikh, the "General" community including all persons who are not Muslims or Sikhs. As the smaller minorities would, upon the population basis have little or no representation since they would lose the weightage which assures them seats in the Provincial Legislatures, we have made the arrangements set out in paragraph 20 below to give them a full representation upon all matters of special interest to the minorities.

19. i) We, therefore, propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives, each part of the Legislature (General, Muslim or Sikh) electing its own representatives by the method of propotional representation with a single transferable vote:—

Table Of Representation

Section A.

Province	General	Muslim	Total
Madras ...	45	4	49
Bombay ...	19	2	2
United Provinces	47	8	55
Bihar ...	31	5	36
Central Provinces	16	1	17
Orissa ...	9	0	9
Total	167	20	187

Section B.

Province	Genaral	Muslim	Sikh	Total
Punjab ...	8	16	4	28
N. W. F. Province	0	3	0	3
Sind ...	1	3	0	4
Total	9	22	4	35

Section C.

Province		General	Muslim	Total
Bengal	...	27	33	60
Assam	...	7	3	10
	Total	34	36	70
Total for British India				292
Maximum for Indian States				93
	Total			385

Note — In order to represent the Chief Commissioner's Provinces there will be added to Section A the Member representing Delhi in the Central Legislative Assembly, the Member representing Ajmer – Merwara in the Central Legislative Assembly, and the representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council. To Section B will be added a representative of British Baluchistan.

ii) It is the intention that the States should be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not, on the basis of the calculations adopted for British India, exceed 93, but the method of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the priliminary stage be representad by a Negotiating Committee.

iii) The representatives thus chosen shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible.

iv) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a Chairman and other officers elected, and an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas set up. Thereafter the Provincial

representatives will divide up into the three sections shown under A, B, & C, in the Table of Representation in sub-paragraph (i) of this paragraph.

v) These sections shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces included in each section, and shall also decide whether any Group constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and, if so, with that provincial subjects the group should deal. Provinces shall have the power to opt out of the Groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (viii) below.

vi) The representatives of the Sections and the Indian States shall re-assemble for the purpose or settling the Union Constitution.

vii) In the Union Constituent Assembly resolution varying the provisions of paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities.

The Chairman of the Assembly shall decide which (if any), of the resolution raise , major communal issues and shall, if so requested by majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

viii) As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any Province to elect to come out of any Group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the new Legislature of the Province after the first general election under the new constitution.

20. The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation of the interests affected, and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon the list of Fundamental Rights, the clauses for the protection of minorities, and a scheme for the administration of the tribal and excluded areas, and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in the Provincial, Group or Union Constitution.

States Negotiating Committee

21. H. E. the Viceroy will forthwith request the Provincial Legislatures to proceed with the election of their representatives and the States to set up a Negotiating Committee. It is hoped that the process of constitution-making can proceed as rapidly as the complexities of the task permit so that the interim period may be as short as possible.

22. It will be necessary to negotiate a Treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power.

23. While the constitution-making proceeds, the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance therefore to the setting up at once of an interim Government having the support of the major political parties. It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through the difficult tasks that face the Government of India. Besides the heavy task of day-to-day administration there is the grave danger of famine to be countered; there are decisions to be taken in many matters of

post-war development which will have a far-reaching effect on India's future and there are important international conferences in which India has to be representated. For all these purposes a Government having popular support is necessary. The Viceroy has already started discussions to this end, and hopes soon to form an Interim Government in which all the portfolios, including that of the War Member will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people. The British Government recognising the significance of the changes in the Government of India will give the fullest measure of co-operation to the Government so formed in the accomplishment of its tasks of administration in bringing about as rapid and smooth a transition as possible.

24. To the leaders and people of India who now have the opprotunity of complete independence we would finally say this. We and our Government and countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian people themselves to agree upon the method of framing the new constitution under which they will live. Despite the labours which we have shared with the Indian Parties, and the exercise of much patience and goodwill by all, this has not been possible. We, therefore, now lay before you proposals which, after listening to all sides and after much earnest thought, we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties, but you will recognise with us that at this supreme moment in Indian history statesmanship demands mutual accommodation.

We ask you to consider the alternative to acceptance of these proposals. After all the efforts which we and the Indian Parties have made together for agreement, we must state that in our view there is small hope of peaceful settlement by agreement of the Indian Parties alone. The alternative would, therefore, be a grave danger of violence, chaos, and even civil war. The result and duration of such a disturbance cannot be foreseen; but it is certain that it would be a terrible disaster for many millions of men, women and children. This is a possiblity which must be regarded with equal abhorrence by the Indian people, our own countrymen and the world as a whole.

We, therefore, lay these proposals before you in the profound hope that they will be accepted and operated by you in the spirit of accommodation and goodwill in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people. We hope that the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth. We hope in any event that you will remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own choice. Whatever that choice may be we look forward with you to your ever-increasing prosperity among the great nations of the world, and to a future even more glorious than your past.

APPENDIX C.

The Mountbatten Plan

(June 3, 1947)

The following is the full text of the announcement made by Lord Mountbatten on June 3, 1947.

1. On February 20, 1947, His Majesty's Government announced their intention of transferring power in British India to Indian hands by June 1948. H. M. G. had hoped that it would be possible for the major parties to co-operate in the working out of the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16, 1946, and evolve for India a constitution acceptable to all concerned. This hope has not been fulfilled.

2. The majority of the representatives of the Provinces of Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, Orissa and the North-West Frontier Province, and the representatives of Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara and Coorg have already made progress in the task of evolving a new Constitution. On the other hand, the Muslim League Party, including in it a majority of the representatives of Bengal, the Punjab and Sind as also the representative of British Baluchistan, has decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly.

3. It has always been the desire of H. M. G. that power should be transferred in accordance with the wishes of the Indian people themselves. This task would have been greatly facilitated if there had been agreement among the Indian political parties. In the absence of such an agreement, the

task of devising a method by which the wishes of the Indian people can be ascertained has devolved on H. M. G. After full consultation with political leaders in India, H. M. G. have decided to adopt for this purpose the plan set out below.

H. M. G. wish to make it clear that they have no intention of attempting to frame any ultimate Constitution for India; this is a matter for the Indians themselves. Nor is there anything in this plan to preclude negotiations between communities for a united India.

4. It is not the intention of H. M. G. to interrupt the work of the existing Constituent Assemby. Now that provision is made for certain provinces specified below, H. M. G. trust that, as a consequence of this announcement, the Muslim League representatives of those Provinces, a majority of whose representatives are already participating in it, will now take their due share in its labours.

At the same time, it is clear that any Constitution framed by this Assembly cannot apply to those parts of the country which are unwilling to accept it. H. M. G. are satisfied that the procedure outlined below embodies the best practical method of ascertaining the wishes of the people of such areas on the issue whether their Constitution is to be framed:—

(a) in the existing Constituent Assembly;

(b) in a new and separate Constituent Assembly consisting of the representatives of those areas which decide not to participate in the existing Constituent Assembly.

When this has been done, it will be possible to determine the authority or authorities to whom power should be transferred.

5. The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding the European members) will therefore each be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim majority districts and the other the rest of the Province. For the purpose of determining the population of districts, the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative. The Muslim majority districts in these two Provinces are set out in the Appendix to this Announcement.

6. The members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the Province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either part decides in favour of partition, divsion will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly.

7. Before the question as to the partition is decded, it is desirable that the representatives of each part should know in advance which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join in the event of the two parts subsequently deciding to remain united. Therefore if any member of either Legislative Assembly so demands, there shall be held a meeting of all members of the Legislative Assembly (other than Europeans) at which a decision will be taken on the issue as to which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join if it were decided by the two parts to remain united.

8. In the event of partition being decided upon, each part of the Legislative Assembly will, on behalf of the areas they represent, decide which of the alternatives mentioned above to adopt.

9. For the immediate purpose of deciding on the issue of partition, the members of the Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab will sit in two parts according to Muslim majority districts (as laid down in the appendix) and non-Muslim majority districts.

This is only a preliminary step of a purely temporary nature as it is evident that for the purposes of a final partition of these provinces a detailed investigation of boundary questions will be needed; and, as soon as a decision involving partition has been taken for either province, a boundary commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned. It will be instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It will also be instructed to take into account other factors. Similar instructions will be given to the Bengal Boundary Commission. Until the report of a boundary commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundaries indicated in the Appendix will be used.

SIND

10. The Legislative Assembly of Sind (excluding the European members) will at a special meeting also take its own decision on the alternatives mentioned above.

N. W. F. P

11. The position of the N. W. F. P. is exceptional. Two of the three representatives of this province are already participating in the existing Constituent Assembly. But it is clear, in view of its geographical situation, and other considerations,

that if the whole or any part of the Punjab decides not to join the existing Constituent Assembly, it will be necessary to give the N. W. F. P. an opportunity to reconsider its position.

Accordingly, in such an event a referendum will be made to the electors of the present Legislative Assembly in the N. W. F. P. to choose which of the alternatives mentioned above they wish to adopt. The referendum will be held under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consulatation with the Provincial Government.

BRITISH BALUCHISTAN

12. British Baluchistan has elected a member but he had not taken his seat in the existing Constituent Assembly. In view of its geographical situation, this Province will also be given an opportunity to reconsider its position and to choose which of the alternatives mentioned above to adopt. H. E. the Governor-General is examining how this can most appropriately be done.

ASSAM

13. Though Assam is predominantly a non-Muslim Province, the district of Sylhet which is contiguous to Bengal is predominantly Muslim. There has been a demand that, in the event or the partition of Bengal, Sylhet should be amalgamated with the Muslim part of Bengal. Accordingly, if it is decided that Bengal should be partitioned, a referendum will be held in Sylhet district under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the Assam Provincial Government to decide whether the district of Sylhet should continue to form part of the Assam Province or should be amalgamated with the new Province of Eastern Bengal, if that Province agrees.

If the referendum results in favour of amalgamation with Eastern Bengal, a Boundary Commission with terms of reference similar to those for the Punjab and Bengal will be set up to demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet district and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts, which will then be transferred to Eastern Bengal. The rest of the Assam Province will in any case continue to participate in the proceedings of the existing Constituent Assembly.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLIES

14. If it is decided that Bengal and the Punjab should be partitioned, it will be necessary to hold fresh elections to choose their representatives on the scale of one for every million of population according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16. 1946. Similar elections will also have to be held for Sylhet in the event of its being decided that this district should form part of East Bengal. The number of representatives to which each area would be entitled is as follows:—

Province	General	Muslims	Sikhs	Total
Sylhet District	1	2	Nil	3
West Bengal	15	4	Nil	19
East Bengal	12	29	Nil	41
West Punjab	3	12	2	17
East Punjab	6	4	2	12

15. In accordance with the mandates given to them, the representatives of the various areas will either join the existing Constituent Assembly or form the new Constituent Assembly.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

16. Negotiations will have to be initiated as soon as possible on administrative consequences of any partition that may have been decided upon : —

(a) Between the representatives of respective successor authorities about all subjects now dealt with by the Central Government including Defence, Finance and Communications.

(b) Between different successor authorities and H. M. G. for treaties in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power.

(c) In the case of Provinces that may be partitioned as to administration of all provincial subjects such as the division of assests and liabilities, the police and other services, the High Courts provincial institutions, etc.

17. Agreements with tribes of the N. W. Frontier of India will have to be negotiated by the appropriate sucessor authority.

THE STATES

18. H. M. G. wish to make it clear that the decisions announced above relate only to British India and that their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission memorandum of May 12, 1946, remains unchanged.

19. In order that the successor authorities may have time to prepare themselves to take over power, it is important that all the above processes should be completed as quickly as possible. To avoid delay, the different Provinces or parts of Provinces will proceed independently as far as

practicable within the conditions of this Plan, the existing Constituent Assembly and the new Constituent Assembly (if formed) will proceed to frame Constitutions for their respective territories, they will of course be free to frame their own rules.

TRANSFER OF POWER

20. The major political parties have repeatedly emphasised their desire that there should be the earliest possible transfer of power in India.

With this desire His Majesty's Government are in full sympathy and they are willing to anticipate the date of June, 1948 for the handing over of power by the setting up of an independent Indian Government or Governments at an even earlier date.

Accordingly, as the most expeditious, and indeed the only practicable way of meeting this desire, His Majesty's Government propose to introduce legislation during the current session for the transfer of power this year on a Dominion Status basis to one or two successor authorities according to the decisions taken as a result of this announcement. This will be without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not the part of India in respect of which they have authority will remain within the British Commonwealth.

21. H. E. the Governor-General will from time to time make such further announcements as may be necessary in regard to procedure or any other matters for carrying out the above arrangements.

APPENDIX

Muslim majority districts of Punjab and Bengal according to 1941 census.

1 THE PUNJAB

LAHORE DIVISION. Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot.

RAWALPINDI DIVISION. Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Mianwali, Lyallpur, Montgomery. Multan, Muzaffargarh.

2 BENGAL

CHITTAGONG DIVISION. Chittagong, Noakhali, Tippera.

DACCA DIVISIOT. Jessore, Murshidabad, Nadia.

RAJSHAHI DIVISION. Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi, Rangpur.